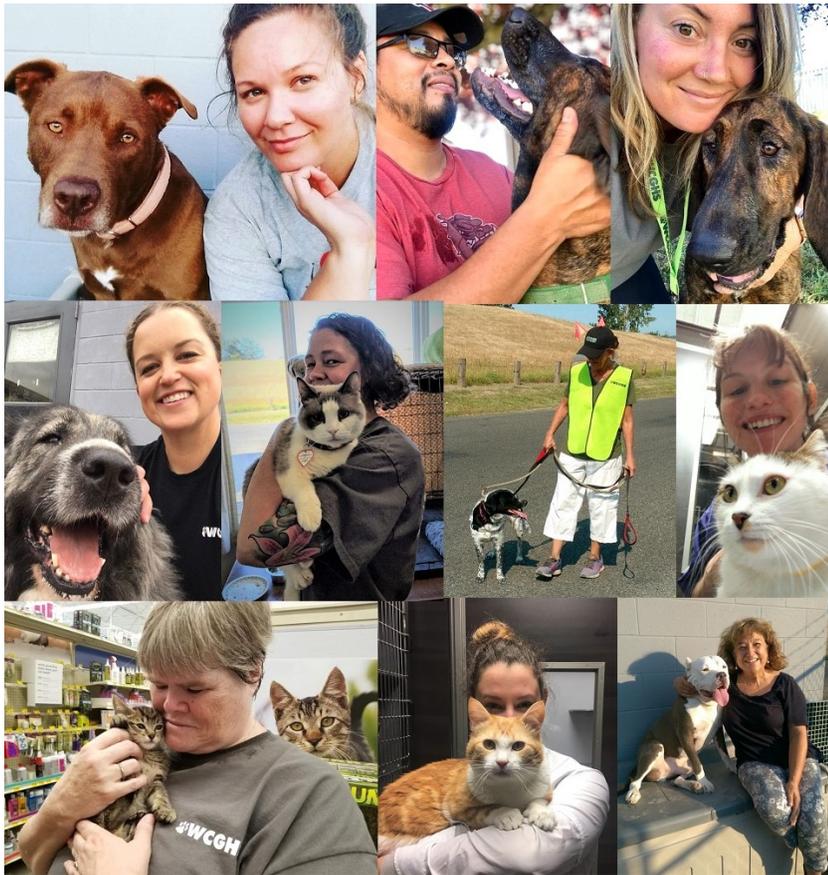




# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



*West Columbia Gorge Humane Society has helped over 5,000 cats and dogs find forever homes.*



## Mission

*The mission of the West Columbia Gorge Humane Society is to end euthanasia of all healthy or treatable companion animals in our community and find them permanent, loving homes.*



[www.wcghs.org](http://www.wcghs.org)

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## ABOUT WEST COLUMBIA GORGE HUMANE SOCIETY

### History

The WCGHS is a no-kill, independent, non-profit animal shelter established in 1994. Originally operated as a cats-only shelter, WCGHS entered into an agreement with the cities of Camas and Washougal in 2007 to manage the Animal Control facility located next door to the cat shelter. This facility is separate from the cat shelter and houses up to 12 dogs awaiting owner redemption or adoption. Thanks to the generous donation of a 1450 sf manufactured home by a local business in 2008, we were able to replace the original cat building, which more than doubled our capacity. This also allowed us the ability to have separate spaces for intake, and isolation of sick cats. We currently have the capacity for 60 cats, with another 60 cats and kittens housed in local foster homes.

### What is a No-Kill Shelter?

As a shelter committed to a “no kill” mission, we do not euthanize healthy or treatable animals regardless of time, space, breed or age. We work with each animals’ individual needs, with the goal of placing them in a loving, forever home.

While we are not able to take all animals that come to us, because of space, but we make a lifetime commitment to those we shelter. We advocate spaying and neutering and dedicate resources to quality adoptions, foster homes, sheltering, community outreach, and education as alternatives to euthanizing healthy animals for population control.

### Who do we help?

Clark County residents make thousands of calls to us for help each year. We respond to each one, offering advice and assistance with pet problems to help keep the animals with their owners. We take in as many animals as our staff, space, and foster network can accommodate.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Physical address:

Dog/Cat Shelter  
2695/2675 S. Index St.  
Washougal, WA 98671

#### Mailing address:

WCGHS  
PO Box 270  
Washougal, WA 98671

#### Phone:

Cat Shelter: 360.835.3464  
Dog Shelter: 360.335.0941  
Fax: 360.859.4544

### Hours of operations

Monday-Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Closed Sundays.

#### General Emails:

[info@wcfgs.org](mailto:info@wcfgs.org) – general questions, animal surrenders

[volunteer@wcfgs.org](mailto:volunteer@wcfgs.org) – volunteer questions

[adoptions@wcfgs.org](mailto:adoptions@wcfgs.org) – adoption inquiries and questions

[foster@wcfgs.org](mailto:foster@wcfgs.org) – foster inquiries and staff communication

## SHELTER MANAGEMENT

West Columbia Gorge Humane Society relies on a limited number of staff, a core group of volunteers and the Board of Directors to take care of the day to day operations, shelter management, fundraising and events. Staff includes an Executive Director, Volunteer and Programs Manager, Dog & Cat Shelter Managers and staff.

The West Columbia Gorge Humane Society's Board of Directors is an all-volunteer board comprised of residents from the local community

The Board has nine areas of focus comprised of working committees lead by WCGHS volunteers. Areas of interest include:

- 🐾 **Planning:** Strategic Planning, Project Management and Grant Writing
- 🐾 **Development:** Events, Corporate Sponsorship, Capital Campaigns, Sustained Donor Opportunities, Major Gifts and Employee Giving
- 🐾 **Communications/Marketing:** Print, Graphic Design, Website-Frontend, Newsletters, Branding, Social Media, Customer Service, Photography/Video and Merchandise
- 🐾 **Environment of Care:** Medical, Operations, Data Entry, Facilities and Animal Behaviors/Needs
- 🐾 **Adoption/Foster:** Adoption Events, Adoptions, Fosters and Adoption Follow Up
- 🐾 **Finance:** Budget, Audits, Tax Filings, Accounting, Intake of Money and Procurement
- 🐾 **Community Outreach:** Events (non-adoption), Education, Youth Programs, Spay & Neuter Outreach, Bully Breed Ambassador, Partnership Coordinator, Therapy and Community Stewardship
- 🐾 **Personnel Management:** Human Resources, Volunteer Recruitment, Volunteer Retention, Crisis Management and Youth Volunteers
- 🐾 **IT/Technology:** Software, Hardware, Security, Website-Backend, Infrastructure and Data Support

To Contact a Board Member: [board@wcghs.org](mailto:board@wcghs.org)



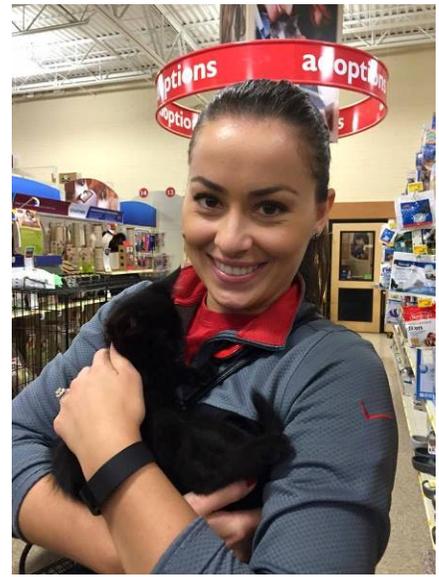
## BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

### Volunteering at WCGHS

WCGHS relies almost entirely on volunteers to keep the shelters functioning day in and day out. There are a wide range of opportunities to volunteer within the agency. From serving on a committee to walking a dog, all persons who donate their time play a vital role in improving the life of the animals we serve.

### Goals of the Volunteer Program

- 🐾 To recruit and retain a group of dedicated volunteers who are willing to take on the tasks necessary to support the mission of the WCGHS.
- 🐾 To provide initial training and periodic updates to ensure that all volunteers are up-to-date on current policies and procedures
- 🐾 For volunteers to become ambassadors for the safety and welfare of animals in our community.
- 🐾 To provide volunteers with pride and a sense of purpose in making a difference in the lives of homeless animals.



### Age Qualifications

**Adult Volunteers:** 18 years and up. Volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of six months, while volunteering a minimum 2-4 hours a month.

**Youth Volunteers:** Volunteers 16-18 may volunteer without a parent during open hours when staff is there. Those under 16 may volunteer alongside a parent or guardian. They are not able to handle dogs but may be able to handle cats depending on their age and skills.

### Special Case and Community Service Volunteers

Volunteers who are associated with agencies such as Goodwill, PIC or ARC are handled by the shelter managers on a case by case basis. We may be able to offer community service to adults and students or youth organizations depending on needs and staffing at the time. Please contact the Volunteer Manager for more information.

### Application Process, Screen and Orientation

All potential volunteers must attend an orientation and fill out an online Volunteer Application, including waivers. The application will be screened by the Volunteer Manager and applicant will be contacted by phone or email. The purpose of the screen is to try to best match the needs of the shelter with the applicant's interests, abilities and time availability.

Group volunteer orientations may be scheduled monthly, depending on sign ups, or individual tours may be set up at the shelter in between group orientations.

## Volunteer Training

- After the prospective volunteer attends an orientation, they will be scheduled for a training shift under a mentor or staff for the shift they are interested in.
- Volunteers will be scheduled to receive any further training that may be required depending on the area they have chosen.
- Volunteers may volunteer in non-handling roles while waiting for animal handling training.
- Once trained, the dog/cat shelter manager will approve the shifts they can sign up for and give them any specific area training and policies. Volunteers will sign up for future approved shifts in our online system.
- All volunteers **MUST** attend the specific job training for their area prior to signing up for future shifts. For example, all dog handlers/walkers must attend dog handling or walking training. These trainings will be conducted by staff or an experienced dog volunteer mentor. A short period of job shadowing may be provided to ensure all procedures are well understood.
- Additional trainings will be offered periodically to allow for volunteer advancement in responsibilities and opportunities, and for current volunteer to stay current on all necessary skills required for their area.

## Personal Expectations

### Volunteers must:

- 🐾 Support the mission of WCGHS both inside the shelter and in the community.
- 🐾 Take their commitment as a volunteer seriously.
- 🐾 Treat the animals with care, patience and respect
- 🐾 Conduct themselves in a professional manner with co-workers and the public.
- 🐾 Keep all client data confidential.
- 🐾 Be open and honest about your current assignment. If it's not a good fit, we'll find something else. Feedback is welcome and encouraged.
- 🐾 Always ask before you make a decision you are unsure of.
- 🐾 Treat all WCGHS volunteers and paid staff with respect.
- 🐾 Adhere at all times to policies and procedures that have been established.



## WCGHS VOLUNTEER ON-GOING OPPORTUNITIES

**Shelter AM Cleaners:** Light housekeeping including cleaning kennels, changing litter boxes, laundry, dishes, feeding, vacuuming and mopping.

**Adoption Center Cleaners:** Visit PetSmart locations where WCGHS offers pet adoptions to clean litter boxes, feed and visit with the cats on display.

**Adoption Aides and Counselors:** Meet with potential adopters and facilitate the adoption process.

**Dog Walkers:** Regularly walk the dogs. This is great exercise in a nice community park along the Columbia River and on the Dike train next to the shelter.

**Enrichment:** Provide enrichment and socialization for the cats and dogs in the shelter.

**Foster Care:** Foster caregivers help raise and socialize kittens and puppies in their private homes, foster medical and special needs pets.

**Transporters:** Take animals to veterinarian appointments and back and forth to adoption centers and other adoption events.

**PM Care:** Evening pet care in both shelters. Clean kennels, litter boxes, feed, water, medicate if needed and quiet socializing. Must be 18 to do PM care in the dog shelter, but families can volunteer in the Cat Shelter. Great family time where kids can learn the value of volunteer service in the community.

**Office Support:** Answer calls about lost and found pets, adoptable pets, and basic shelter information. Help with record keeping.

**Community and Special Events:** Staff community and fundraising events, give education presentations, and run errands.



**Fundraising:** Do you have a special talent or skill that would be valuable to a special fundraising effort? Let us know how you would like to help.

**Photographer:** We are always in need of attractive photos of our cats and dogs to promote their adoption into permanent, loving homes.

**Maintenance:** Our dog and cat shelters always need odd jobs and minor maintenance help. Call us to find out how you can be handy. Sometimes big jobs, too.

**Marketing:** Help promote the work of the animal shelter. Encourage pet adoptions. Solicit involvement from local residents, businesses, and community organizations. Help raise money to care for the animals.

## **VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

### **Attendance**

Because the shelters are volunteer operated facilities and the animals depend on us for their care, it is very important for the health of the animal, to know we have the needed coverage. The only way we can know who is coming and where we still need help, is if everyone helps us out by signing up for their shifts ahead of time. Signing up for a shift lets us know you are committed to helping on those days.

If after signing up, a volunteer finds they cannot come in, we ask that they go back into the schedule and update it. Volunteers scheduled for a shift are expected to find a replacement if they are unable to make their shift. If this is not possible, they must notify the supervisor for their area. The shelter and animals are dependent on volunteers and their help. If volunteers are signed up and do not show up and do not let anyone know, it can affect the health and care of the animals. Three unscheduled absences may exclude a volunteer from further volunteering with WCGHS.

Prior notification is appreciated for any changes due to vacation or other conflicts. If this commitment cannot be honored for any reason, the volunteer's supervisor should be notified so that a replacement can be found.

### **Sign-in Procedures**

All volunteers are required to sign in and out for their shifts and record any hours volunteered. This information helps us track the tasks performed and the volunteer hours worked each month, which is crucial when applying for grants and funding. A volunteer logbook or computer will be kept at each shelter. Volunteers will each record their hours and area worked.

Detailed instructions on signing up for shifts in our online Volgistics system will be sent to volunteers after they have completed their orientation and their application is processed in to the system.

### **Dog & Cat Shelter Security**

Some shelter volunteers are entrusted with the entry code for the cat/dog shelter for after hour shifts. Each volunteer will be required to sign the "Cat/Dog Shelter Security" form which states that the entry code is to remain confidential and should not be shared with anyone. It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that the door to the outside is secure at all times during their shift and locked when they leave.

WCGHS will soon have video surveillance cameras located at the shelters to ensure the safety of our animals and volunteers that records on an ongoing basis.

### **Visitors and Personal Guests**

Only WCGHS approved volunteers and employees may handle or transport animals in shelter care. Any guests wishing to shadow a volunteer must be pre-approved by the Volunteer or Shelter Manager and may not be able to interact with the animals.

## DRESS CODE

WCGHS Volunteers are expected to wear clothes that will represent WCGHS in a professional manner while working shifts at the shelter during business hours and at events. When working directly with the animals or performing cleaning duties, it is recommended that volunteers wear comfortable clothing while still conveying a neat, professional image when working with the public.

- 🐾 Volunteers must wear close-toed shoes.
- 🐾 While cleaning, rubber boots that can be easily disinfected are encouraged.
- 🐾 No open-toed shoes permitted when working in animal areas or events. (flip flops and sandals)
- 🐾 Long pants, capris or shorts with an approved length of 3 inches above knee.
- 🐾 Tank tops are not permitted. Sleeveless shirts may be worn.
- 🐾 No dangling jewelry/ear rings for safety reasons.
- 🐾 Wear clothes that will not be ruined by bleach and/or cleaning products.
- 🐾 Wear appropriate gloves, coveralls and booties as necessary.

## Working Special Events

When representing the shelter at special events, volunteers are asked to dress to convey a professional public image. For most events, volunteers are expected to wear either WCGHS apparel or a shelter apron, while working. Aprons will be available for volunteers use at the event, if they wish. Any WCGHS apparel, such as shirts or sweatshirts, are the responsibility of the volunteer to purchase. Depending on the event, WCGHS volunteer badges may be given to those working.

For some special fundraisers, special attire may be worn. Some events, may have a t-shirt designed for that event. At our annual dinner/auction, “A Tail to Remember” dressier attire is required. Instructions will be given to those who sign up for any of our special events on the dress code required for that specific event.

## WORKPLACE SAFETY

### Volunteer Accident Reporting

The policy of WCGHS and the City of Washougal is that all bites or scratches that break the skin, whether intentional or not, must be reported immediately upon injury. If a cat or dog bites or scratches and breaks the skin, please contact the Shelter or Volunteer Manager as soon as possible. ***An incident report must be completed for our records.*** The injured area should be immediately washed with soap and water, and the volunteer should seek appropriate medical care from their primary care physician. First aid supplies are located in each shelter. Be sure to check with the shelter staff for the location.



### Limited-Access Areas

**Cat Shelter:** Some areas, such as the Sniffles or Isolation Rooms of the shelter are off limits to volunteers that have not specifically been trained to work in these areas. In the Isolation Room, depending on the reason for the animal currently in it, it may be only staff. Any worker going in these areas must be completely disinfected before entering the main part of the shelter. These

procedures are critical for protecting the main population from the often very contagious illnesses that we may be treating in isolation areas.

**Dog Shelter:** The dog shelter does not have a designated isolation area. Instead, animals that require handlers with specific training or experience are in marked kennels. An example is the quarantine kennel. If an animal is in quarantine, there is a 2-foot boundary from the front. Information is listed on the chart on the individual dog kennel. Volunteers are asked to read the notes prior to opening the dog's kennel door. Volunteers and/or public, should not place fingers or hands in the kennels. These procedures are critical for protecting both the animal and the volunteers.



## Personal Hygiene and Disease Prevention

While volunteering at WCGHS, volunteers may come into contact with diseases communicable to humans and/or to household pets. All volunteers should take care to change and wash any clothes and shoes worn while volunteering at the shelter so as not to spread disease to personal pets. Any volunteer approved to work with sick animals should be properly protecting themselves from disease, particularly those transmitted to humans. WCGHS recommends that personal pets of volunteers remain current on all veterinarian recommended vaccinations.

When working with animals, it is important to follow good hygiene practices to protect your health and the health of the animals.

- 🐾 Change shoes (or wear booties) and wash your hands upon arrival at the shelter
- 🐾 Keep hair tied back or wear a cap
- 🐾 Wash hands and/or disinfect between tasks
- 🐾 Wear disposable gloves when cleaning up messes or handling litter boxes
- 🐾 Wash hands thoroughly (up arms, between fingers) before leaving
- 🐾 Change clothes when you get home before interacting with your own pets. Wash you clothes in hot water and bleach, if possible.

## Harassment/Discrimination

West Columbia Gorge Humane Society is committed to providing a harassment-free workplace for both staff and volunteers. WCGHS will not tolerate any speech or conduct that is intended to, or has the effect of, intimidating, abusing or harassing any employee or volunteer because of his or her race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy applies to any person associated with the organization.

## Alcohol and Drug Policy

The West Columbia Gorge Humane Society is committed to maintaining a safe and productive working environment for all individuals. The use of drugs or alcohol by individuals associated with WCGHS could create a serious threat to safe and productive operations. Therefore, to protect the health and safety of fellow volunteers, employees, the general public, and to safeguard WCGHS

property and community image, WCGHS has adopted this Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy. Volunteers who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination from the volunteer program.

West Columbia Gorge Humane Society prohibits the manufacture, distribution, possession, concealment, use, sale, purchase, transfer of or being under the influence of alcohol, inhalants, illegal drugs or controlled substances while on the job, including meal and break periods, on WCGHS premises, including parking lots, in WCGHS owned vehicles or while on WCGHS business, whether on or off WCGHS premises, including meetings, adoption events and community events. If a WCGHS event is held where alcohol is being served, all WCGHS staff and volunteers attending such functions must exercise restraint in their use of alcoholic beverages, keeping in mind that their conduct is a reflection of WCGHS.

The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted while on duty only if it does not impair a volunteer or employee's ability to perform the essential functions of their job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace or animals in their care.

### **Smoking Policy**

Smoking is not allowed in any of the shelter building. Volunteers are not permitted to smoke while on shift or in public/visitor view. Volunteers may take a smoking break, away from the building, public view or in their personal vehicle.

## **TERMINATION POLICY**

### **Grievance Policy**

The purpose of the grievance process is to maintain an atmosphere of open, two-way communications between staff and volunteers, to foster an environment of trust and to resolve volunteer issues and concerns in a timely manner. You are encouraged to raise concerns directly to the Volunteer Services Manager as soon as possible.

### **Volunteer Resignation**

For a variety of reasons, a volunteer may at any time decide to no longer donate their time to our facility. If the reason has to do with the particular job that you have been working in, we will commit to finding a better fit for your interests and talents. We would ask that if you do decide to leave, that you please give us sufficient notice (1-2 weeks) to be able to find a replacement for your position.

### **Dismissal of a Volunteer**

Volunteers are essential to the success of the WCGHS. We hope to attract hard-working, dedicated volunteers to our organization, and will work hard to be sure they have the knowledge, tools and support they need to be successful. We expect our volunteers to support our mission and comply with our established policies and procedures. In the unfortunate event that a volunteer does not adhere to the policies, procedures and values of WCGHS, termination of our relationship may result by a manager or board member if deemed necessary.

Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- 🐾 Unlawful harassment or assault of fellow volunteers, customers, employees or anyone else
- 🐾 Coercion, intimidation, or threatening any person on shelter property
- 🐾 Discourteous treatment to or the use of inappropriate language toward a shelter employee, customer, volunteer or anyone else
- 🐾 Physical abuse to animals or any intentional act to harm an animal
- 🐾 Possession of weapons or firearms on shelter premises or in shelter vehicles.
- 🐾 Conduct undermining to the shelter and its objectives
- 🐾 Making slanderous or libelous statement(s) concerning fellow volunteers, customers, volunteers, the organization or the animals it shelters
- 🐾 Immoral conduct or indecency on shelter property
- 🐾 Posting or removal of notices, signs or writing in any form on bulletin boards without specific approval by a supervisor or manager
- 🐾 Excessive tardiness or absenteeism
- 🐾 Failure to follow policies of shelter vehicle use
- 🐾 Unsatisfactory job performance
- 🐾 Improper use of confidential information about WCGHS
- 🐾 Conducting personal business on shelter time or engaging in excessive, unnecessary or unauthorized use of shelter equipment, supplies or resources (including personal use of shelter vehicle and property without proper authorization)
- 🐾 Violation of the shelter's Alcohol and Drug Policy
- 🐾 Theft or unauthorized removal of property belonging to others or to WCGHS
- 🐾 Malicious damaging of shelter property or that of fellow volunteers, customers, employees, or anyone else
- 🐾 Failure to report an accident or personal injury immediately
- 🐾 Refusing to give information to a supervisor or manager
- 🐾 Violation of any safety procedure, program, or rule; causing unsafe conditions or carelessness with regard to your own safety or the safety of others
- 🐾 Failure to properly use safety devices, tampering with safety equipment and/or attempting to bypass or defeat a machine's safety feature(s)
- 🐾 Smoking in areas where it is prohibited
- 🐾 Littering or causing unsanitary or unsightly conditions
- 🐾 Unauthorized solicitations or distributions
- 🐾 Any other conduct which WCGHS deems to be grounds for disciplinary action or discharge.

## CANCELING YOUR SHIFT

We know at times volunteers may have to cancel a regular shift. In most cases, volunteers are able to schedule this ahead with staff, but emergencies and sudden changes can happen. For the safety of our animals, please follow these guidelines when you need to make a change to a shift you are signed up for.

### **Canceling your shift more than 24 hours in advance:**

- Send an email to the Shelter Manager and the Volunteer Manager.
- Send in its own email, not as a reply to previous emails. Put in subject line, that you are canceling and date.
- In the email, give the date, time and name of the shift(s) you need to change.
- Delete your shift assignment in Volgistics – this will allow other volunteers to sign up for your vacant shift.
- Post your need for shift coverage on the appropriate WCGHS Facebook group, ie. Dog, Cat or Volunteers – *you must tag your Shelter Manger and the Volunteer Manager.*
- If you find someone to cover your shift, send an email to the Shelter Manager and the Volunteer Manager with the name of the volunteer covering for you and the shift.

### **Canceling your shift within 24 hours prior to your shift OR on the day of your shift:**

- For the safety of our animals, YOU MUST FIRST CALL your Shelter Manager and the Volunteer Manager to let them know you cannot make your shift.
- If it is the day of your shift or the night before, after staff has gone home, PLEASE CALL THE SHELTER and leave a message. This will assure, whoever is working the shelter, will get the message. (Note: even if you left a message with the managers, it could be their day off, they didn't get the message, etc. We want to be sure the person working the shelter that day, does get your message.)
- If it is for a shift at Petsmart, you must call the Shelter Manager or WCGHS Store Coordinator as well.
- After you have made all necessary phone calls, you may post on Facebook and/or send a follow up email to your Shelter Manger/Volunteer Manager.
- Send in its own email, not as a reply to previous emails. Put in subject line, that you are canceling and date.

### **Canceling a shift when the shelter is closed (ie. Tuck-in, PM meds, Sundays/holidays, etc):**

- When cancelling a shift that occurs when the shelter is closed, you must CALL and TALK to a staff member to let them know you are not able to come in. If you are not able to reach the Shelter Manger, call the next person on the contact list (below). Keep going until you actually speak to someone.

**A contact phone list will be posted at each shelter,  
with both the contact and emergency information for that shelter.**

## SUMMARY

These guidelines have been compiled to inform you WCGHS's practices, and policies. If there are any questions, or you do not understand some portion of this document, please contact the Volunteer or Shelter Manager. Adherence to this handbook will insure a safe environment and promote a good working relationship. Volunteering can be very rewarding and we sincerely hope you enjoy working with us toward our goals.

Each year, in addition to the agreements checked off when filling out your volunteer application, volunteers will be required to sign a Liability Waiver, Photo Release and Acknowledgement Confidentiality Pledge form. You may get this from the Volunteer or Shelter Manager. Once signed, return to the Volunteer or Shelter Manager.