



Volunteer Handbook

WELCOME

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your gift of time to The Rescue Project! We are so grateful for your commitment to our organization.

Our Vision

The Rescue Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to building trustful relationships with people and their pets and improving the lives of needy animals living in underserved Kansas City communities. We provide basic survival items such as food and dog houses and offer low cost veterinary resources emphasizing the need to spay and neuter. We also provide community education/awareness to the public on responsible pet ownership and empower people to make a difference.

Our Mission

To help abandoned, neglected and forgotten animals in Kansas City and surrounding areas. To raise awareness through community education programs of animal overpopulation, disease control and provide resources for veterinary services.

We depend on our volunteers for every aspect of our organization: outreach missions, fostering rescued dogs and cats, transporting outreach pets to vet appointments, taking foster pets to the veterinarian for treatment, coordinating adoption events, trapping and releasing feral cats, and assisting with fundraising work!

Each of these duties makes a huge difference in the lives of the dogs and cats we rescue. Thank you for taking the first step in helping us achieve our mission.

We look forward to making this a very rewarding experience for you. Please don't hesitate to ask questions!

Sincerely,

The Rescue Project Leadership Team

CONTACTS

Please refer to our **website** as well as our **Facebook pages** for a list of current contacts which includes our Board of Directors and our Volunteers Leads.

Volunteer Lead Roles include:

- Executive Director
- Outreach Lead
- Adoption Coordinator
- Foster Coordinator & Animal Vetting Coordinator
- Foster Supplies Coordinator
- Volunteer Coordinator
- PetFinder Coordinator
- TNR (Trap Neuter Release) Coordinator
- Fundraising Coordinator

Website: <https://therescueproject.net>

Facebook Main Page: <https://www.facebook.com/KCRescueProject/>

Facebook Volunteer Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1481594165394335/>

GENERAL GUIDELINES

If you know of an animal in need of rescue or rehoming:

Please directly contact our **Executive Director** or our **Foster Coordinator**.

Please note that if you respond to a situation alone and take in an animal, we cannot guarantee placement of the animal since as we have limited resources. We may not be able to take in every animal as our mission is focused around the animals we assist on outreach; however, directly messaging is the most likely way to receive a response and get the situation on the radar of those who can help!

If you know of an address needing outreach assistance:

Please directly contact our **Executive Director**.

If you go out on your own into the community on any type of outreach involving an animal you need to please know that you are representing yourself only. Due to safety issues and legalities we ask that you only say you are a representative of TRP if you are with a trained TRP outreach lead or have special permission from an outreach lead or our Executive Director. This is to ensure your safety and to protect our organization should anything go wrong.

VOLUNTEER FACEBOOK PAGE

Our Volunteer Coordinator will send you a friend request in order to add you to our private Facebook group.

We post our outreach dates and all volunteer & foster needs to our private group where you can elect to participate as you are able.

We want to be able to keep the option for everyone to post freely in our group vs. moving to all posts requiring admin approval as we love updates, answering your questions, and sharing in your experiences.

To continue to be able to make this group as productive as possible with the resources we have, which includes using our private Facebook group as a means for allocating volunteers, posting important information, etc. We ask that you review the **Volunteer Page Guidelines** below and follow them before posting or responding to a post.

VOLUNTEER PAGE GUIDELINES

THE FOLLOWING POSTS ARE APPROPRIATE:

- Updates regarding your fosters (current & past) WE LOVE THESE!
- Questions regarding events you are assisting with or think we should be involved in
- General information you think may be helpful to the group

THE FOLLOWING POSTS WILL BE REMOVED:

- Posts regarding animals that are not in the care of The Rescue Project and are needing rehomed. We want ALL animals to find homes; however, we need to keep this page dedicated to networking the animals in our care as we have dedicated fosters giving their time to these pets.
- Posts regarding animals in need in the community. Please directly message our Outreach Coordinator. We cannot risk members of our group's safety should someone decide to go out on their own.
- *ANY POSTS INVOLVING PERSONAL ATTACKS OR NEGATIVITY TOWARDS ANOTHER MEMBER OF THIS GROUP OR THE RESCUE COMMUNITY.*

OUTREACH PHOTOS AND VIDEOS:

Due to privacy and potential address and location information, all videos taken on outreach will need to be approved by an admin prior to posting.

QUESTIONS REGARDING SPECIFIC OUTREACH CLIENTS/PHOTOS should be answered by the outreach lead(s). We love that volunteers come on outreach with our team; however, many of our clients we have been involved with for several months and there are often details that go along with each client. This will help eliminate misinformation and hopefully some tension when there are particularly sensitive cases.

OUTREACH

We are currently seeking people to join our outreach teams (must be over 18) which go into the community several times a week to deliver food, dog houses tie outs etc. to animals in need and also educate their owners on spaying and neutering and proper care.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

These guidelines may seem juvenile, but they are there to keep our team safe. Please keep in mind when you're doing outreach you aren't dealing with your typical shelter dog. You are dealing with dogs who are extremely under socialized, sometimes aggressive and some that are used strictly for "safety purposes". We often deal with extreme poverty cases and some serious neglect cases. Please keep an OPEN MIND and be ready to work and change some lives!

Our team leads are responsible for all record keeping and ensuring our volunteers feel comfortable speaking, working and dealing with outreach dogs and clients. If you have any questions please feel free to ask. Part of the team leads job is to correct or express a more efficient way of doing things with new volunteers while on outreach.

SAFETY TIPS:

- Don't bring ANYTHING valuable (purses, jewelry etc)
- Dress down. You will be getting jumped on, stepping in feces, mud and many other things.
- Be aware of all your surroundings at all times.
- Our job is to educate and help, not to criticize or ridicule. Please keep negative comments to yourself until we're inside the vehicle.
- In the event of an emergency or dangerous situation, the first thing you should do and the best thing to do • is keep calm. Do not panic, do not antagonize, and do not make the situation worse. Should there be a dangerous situation the code word "HERO" will be used to communicate between leads and volunteers to return to the vehicle immediately.
- Understand the behavior and body language of the animals you encounter.
- Never reach over a fence to pet or greet a dog. The yard is their territory and they will protect their people.
- Be vigilant about watching the dogs you're interacting with. They can go

from friendly to aggressive without warning.

Always listen to your team lead. They are watching out for your safety, the well-being of the animals, and our relationships with the people. If you do not listen, or continue to do something you're told not to do, you will be asked to leave.

Prior to your first outreach trip you will be asked to sign a waiver of liability, stating you understand the risks of attending outreach.