



Volunteer Handbook

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Welcome to the Furball Farm Volunteer Program

The Furball Farm is designed to be a sanctuary, a place of refuge for cats in otherwise hopeless situations. This means providing quality care and housing to many homeless cats in hopeless situations and adopting as many cats to loving homes as possible.

Although the building grounds are essential elements of Furball Farm, you, the people who volunteer your time are a big part of what makes Furball Farm a success.

You will help care for the cats that live here by providing them with food and water, keeping their living environment clean and disease free and looking for signs of illness. Another important aspect is human interaction and relationship building with our furballs that will help with their mental and physical stimulation.

Some of you will act as a voice to the public. It is this public who will adopt our cats and make donations for Furball Farm. Without the support of the public, Furball Farm will never be a success.

We hope that you find joy and fulfillment in volunteering here!

Goals of the Volunteer Program

The volunteer program is a crucial part of Furball Farm. Because we are a non-profit organization, we depend on people donating their time, money and other resources for our successful operation. While money is obviously essential, time is of the utmost importance, as there is never enough time to accomplish all that we want to do for the cats.

This is where you, the volunteers, come in. By volunteering at Furball Farm, you will:

- Allow the cats to receive attention, interaction and socialization. Cleaning, disinfecting and providing medical care for the cats is our first priority, making it difficult to spend quality time with the cats. Many of our cats need socialization, which not only makes the cats easier to handle, but increases their potential for adoption.

Mission

Furball Farm is dedicated to providing a place of refuge for cats in hopeless situations, so that each cat can live out his or her life in a cage free environment, or until he or she is placed in to a loving home.

Furball Farm Pet Sanctuary is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, tax exempt.

Our mission is to save abandoned, unwanted and helpless cats. The cats that are accepted in to our sanctuary are cats that have no tomorrow, we are their last resort. We will only accept cats from clinics, rescues, impounds, human societies that are deemed unadoptable due to behavior. We are also trying to help with the unwanted feral cat problem in Faribault by trapping and spay/neutering them and releasing them either to other farms or to our farm. We have already taken over 20 homeless cats and have had them vetted and placed accordingly.

Very often, after a formally deemed unadoptable cat has entered our sanctuary, we realize they are sweet cats that just didn't adjust well to life in a cage. Those cats will be available for adoption for a donation. We do not believe in the destruction of healthy pets. Only animals suffering from incurable illness or injury are humanly euthanized.

Everything needed to allow these cats to live the rest of their lives in safety and comfort are on the shoulders of the volunteers. We pay for housing, food, medical bills, and do everything possible to make sure these cats have a healthy, safe and loving environment.

Furball Farm adheres to the following principles:

- **Sanctuary:** We provide a safe place of refuge for our cats.
- **Adoption:** We believe that the best outcome for each cat is to be adopted into a loving home. Unadopted cats will live their lives in comfort at Furball Farm.
- **Cageless:** No cat will be kept in a cage, except during intake quarantine, when sick, or as otherwise necessary for the health of the cat or other cats. No cat will be kept in a cage for a prolonged period of time.
- **Individual Care:** Each cat will be provided with a high quality of life including:
 - Food and water
 - Clean, and sanitary housing with a home like feel.
 - Medical care
 - Litter boxes
 - Sufficient horizontal and vertical space to live, play and sleep comfortably.
 - Fresh air and sunlight
 - Access to private space
 - Human attention and interaction
 - Activities and toys for physical and mental stimulation.
- **Spay/Neuter:** we spay or neuter each cat before it leaves
- **Euthanasia:** We will euthanize no cat unless it is suffering and there is no reasonable hope of improvement.
- **Respect for People:** We treat each volunteer and members of the public with respect.

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A Note About Handling Cats

As a volunteer, you will be having direct contact with cats and need to be aware that cats have sharp claws and teeth and can be unpredictable. There is always a risk of personal injury during contact with a cat.

On the last page of this document is a Volunteer Waiver that needs to be signed by you in the presence of a current Furball Farm Pet Sanctuary Board Member before you are allowed to volunteer.

In addition, although our cats have received veterinary medical care, are vaccinated, and are monitored closely, there is always the possibility of disease transmission between a cat directly to you, or indirectly to one of your cats.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

FIV is an immune suppressive disease in the same family as HIV, a retrovirus; although, it is not transmissible to humans.

FIV is primarily transmitted from cat to cat through deep bite wounds sustained while fighting and less commonly from mother to offspring at certain stages of the mother's infection, sexual transmission and improperly screened blood transfusions. FIV is extremely unlikely to be transmitted through casual contact, such as, sharing food bowls and litter pans or grooming. The virus is not transmitted via fomites, so you cannot transmit it to other cats in the building or your cats at home through handling FIV+ cats.

Ringworm

Ringworm, a fungus related to athletes' foot, is common in cats, and therefore, is one of our greatest concerns. While ringworm is typically not a huge medical concern for cats, it is very difficult to treat and eradicate from the environment. Spores can live in the environment for up to two years without a host, and cleaning with bleach is the most effective way to eliminate the fungus. Ringworm is also zoonotic (transmissible to humans), but, again, is not typically a medical concern, except in very rare cases. If you or any of your family members (human or feline) have any of the following conditions you must be extremely careful. We recommend you consult your doctor before beginning your volunteer work with us.

- HIV, FIV
- Diabetes
- Organ transplant recipient
- Infant with developing immune system
- Someone on steroid treatments

Daily Duties

AM/Afternoon/Closing

AM DUTIES

- 1. Scoop all litter boxes**
 - Located in house, garage, sanctuary and machine shed.
 - Put dirty litter in garbage bags and then dumpster when done.
- 2. Gather all cat toys**
- 3. Gather dry food & water bowls**
 - Empty dry food back in to large food container.
 - Pour out water in to mop bucket and dump outside.
- 4. Sweep and mop floors in the house, garage and sanctuary (house when needed).**
 - Pull out litter boxes from wall and sweep under and behind them.
 - Make sure fans are on to help dry the floors faster.
- 5. Fresh dry food and water**
 - Using clean bowls, distribute dry food and water to all the locations you originally found them in. Water for the sanctuary is in plastic jugs in the refrigerator.
 - Please refill water jugs with the filtered water faucet in the house and then place them back in the refrigerator for the next person.
 - Fill dry food bowl all the way, don't over fill.
- 6. Vacuuming**
 - Vacuum all cat trees twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays).
- 7. Spot Cleaning**
 - Check floors, beds, blankets, pillows and posts for accidents such as pee, poop and puke. Put soiled blankets and pillows next to the wash in the house to be washed and replace with clean ones.
 - Use the three P's to determine if clean bedding is needed – pooped, peed or puked on.
 - Spray bleach and wipe up any accidents.
- 8. Laundry**
 - Wash laundry that has accumulated in the laundry room.
 - Washer and dryer are in the house and all laundry supplies are on the shelf above the dryer. Add bleach (commonly used in cat rescues) for all blankets and cat beds.
- 9. Dishes**
 - Wash stainless steel bowls and stack in the kitchen and let air dry.
 - Wash any other utensils and place in strainer

AFTERNOON DUTIES

- **“Soup”**
 - Cat food soup is made according to instructions posted on the kitchen cabinet labeled “Soup Recipe”.
 - Feed soup to house, garage, sanctuary and machine shed using stainless steel bowls.
Important: In the winter use heated bowls in the machine shed, there is no heat out there.
 - **Scoop all litter boxes**
 - Located in house, garage, sanctuary and machine shed.
 - Put dirty litter in garbage bags and then dumpster when done.
 - **Top off dry food and water bowls**
 - Water for the sanctuary is in plastic jugs in the refrigerator.
 - Please refill water jugs with the filtered water faucet in the house and then place them back in the refrigerator for the next person.
 - Fill dry food bowl all the way, don’t over fill.
 - **Dishes**
 - Wash stainless steel bowls and stack in the kitchen and let air dry.
 - Wash any other utensils and place in strainer.
 - **Play with cats**
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CLOSING DUTIES (8:00pm to done)

1. **Play/Interact with cats**
2. **Spot Cleaning**
 - Check floors, beds, blankets, pillows and posts for accidents such as pee, poop and puke. Put soiled blankets and pillows next to the wash in the house to be washed and replace with clean ones.
 - Spray bleach and wipe up any accidents.
3. **Top off dry food and water bowls in the house, sanctuary and machine shed.**
 - Water for the sanctuary is in plastic jugs in the refrigerator.
 - Please refill water jugs with the filtered water faucet in the house and then place them back in the refrigerator for the next person.
 - Fill dry food bowl all the way, don’t over fill.
4. **Scoop all litter boxes**
 - Located in house, garage and sanctuary.
 - Put dirty litter in garbage bags and then dumpster when done.
 - Please save this step for last (8:30pm or later), it makes it easier on the morning people.
5. **Before you leave**
 - Leave TV and radio on in the sanctuary.
 - Turn off all lights in the sanctuary and ensure doors are closed

Additional jobs:

- Events - Be a part of our events and activities held at or for Furball Farm. Dates to be announced as they are planned.
- Grooming – brush some of our resident cats to keep them from getting mats
- If time permits, helping us stay organized is always appreciated. If you notice a possible project to be done contact Julie.
- Cat transportation as needed
- Fostering – usually kittens, but occasionally adults. Taking a kitten or cat home with you for their quarantine period if they would not do well in a cage, or if they need extra socializing, or if the kittens are too young to be left alone overnight.

Rules and guidelines

Furball Farm is a working facility; the health and safety of our cats, and volunteers depends on adherence to rules surrounding sanitation, disease control and safety. We know that as a volunteer you are donating your time, and we greatly value and appreciate this. But we must insist that you adhere to our rules and guidelines. These rules are specified in this section.

- Sanitize your hands before entering sanctuary and also when you leave.
- You must be 12 years of age or older to volunteer at furball Farm.
- All volunteers are under the direction of the Furball Farm owner/director.
- If you are not able to work your shift please let us know, either by phone or text. Contact us ASAP if you know in advance that you will not be able to work your shift. If you do not know in advance (within 48 hours of your shift) please leave a post on our furball Farm volunteer Facebook page or notify Julie immediately.
- If you believe yourself, or one of your pets at home, has ringworm, please notify us before arriving for your shift, so we can decide if you should come in that day.

You will be forbidden to volunteer in any capacity if you:

- Mishandle or abuse a cat.
- Are rude to any member of furball Farm or the public.

Becoming a volunteer

In order to become a volunteer, you must:

- Read the volunteer handbook in its entirety
- Attend a volunteer orientation session
- Read and sign the volunteer waiver
- “Friend” Julie Marvets and Annette Berg on Facebook. You will be added to the Furball Volunteers Facebook group; this is where the volunteer schedule is managed by Annette Berg. Every Sunday a new schedule is posted in this group, please let Annette know the days and time you will be available.
- In addition, before performing any job you must have successfully completed training specific to that job.