**ADOPTIONS**

Thank you for signing up to volunteer with our rescue. The more adoptions we have, the more animals we can save. Please read through this hand out so you know what to do at adoption events and if you have any questions please email [almosthomeangels@aim.com](mailto:almosthomeangels@aim.com)

**FIRST HOUR** (SAT 9-10, SUN 11-12)

During this hour we will be setting up for adoptions. This is what we need your help with :

Put up wire crates and make sure they go where the lead volunteer has asked you to put them.

Make sure all crates have a blanket and a toy in them.

All crates then need a cage card, the lead volunteer will usually do this as they know the dogs – but please ask if they need help.

Some of our water bowls attach to the crates, once everything else is set up please attach these ones to the crates with a little water in them (bowls do not need to be full, there is more chance of them being spilled that way)

Help the lead volunteer make sure we have enough adoption forms, contracts etc and that these are out and ready.

Help fosters!! Towards the end of the first hour the fosters will begin to arrive with their dogs - help them find their crates, if they have more than one dog they may need you to hold onto a dog while they get another in the crate. Some fosters will bring a wire crate, they may need help getting this out of the car and setting this up. Please ask fosters if they need any help. Then ensure that they write down their phone number before they leave.

Help members of the public – if people who may want to adopt are standing around let them know what time the event will start and that there will be a lot of dogs and cats looking for homes if they come after that time.

**DURING ADOPTIONS**

Your priority is making sure the animals are happy and safe.

Put water bowls in with dogs who do not have them (only give them a small amount) and keep checking, top up with a little more water if the bowl is empty. If a dog regularly tips their water bowl over, take the bowl out but make sure you give them regular opportunities to have some water.

If water is spilled clean it up and give the dog a dry blanket (ask another volunteer to hold the dog while you do this)

If an animal goes to the toilet in their crate, clean it as soon as you notice it. Ask another volunteer to help you hold the animal while you clean the crate. If it is poop that can not be taken off the blanket easily, please trash the bedding. Remember some of us take the blankets home to wash them – we do not want poop stuck in our machines!!

Take the dogs out for regular walks. Please do not focus on your favorite, rotate taking them out, spend time outside with them walking (not standing still) allow them time to pee and poop and if they poop, pick it up. Always use a slip leash, put your whole hand through the leash and then hold onto it, so not only do you have a firm grip on the leash it is also around your wrist. If there is a dog that barks at adoptions, take this dog out more often than the others, spend time with them outside. Take some treats and work on commands etc. Please try to make the adoption event a positive experience for them and remember that a barking dog does not attract adopters !!

If it is quiet and another volunteer has time to go outside with you – take pictures and email them to us. Please always take pictures outside (unless it is a cat) and try to get the dog to look at you. Please email any pictures to us with the name of the animal in the subject title. Pictures are really important, if the animal does not get adopted that weekend it might get a home during the week because of a picture you have taken!

If they have a sign on their crate saying they are shy please ask a lead volunteer before opening the crate and taking them for a walk.

DO NOT WALK PUPPIES – the puppies at the adoption events have often not had a complete course of vaccinations, this puts them at risk of picking up a virus such as parvo and distemper, both viruses have a high fatality rate. Puppies get this virus by coming into contact with it, dogs spread the virus in there poop and we can spread the virus on our feet (hence no walking) Puppies wil most likely pee or poop in their crate because of this. If you do need to clean the crate please sanitize your hands well before you take them out, ask someone to help you. One of you hold the puppies, the other clean the crate. Then put them straight back in, this is the ONLY time we should touch the puppies. If you speak to someone interested in adopting a puppy please speak to a lead volunteer. If you see a member if public touching a puppy (or allowing their child to do so) please draw their attention to the sign and explain to them that the puppies have not had all of their vaccinations and can get really sick if they come into contact with too many germs from people’s hands. Be polite – but firm – if you have ever seen a puppy sick or dying from parvo or distemper you will know why we are so particular about this rule.

Talk to the public – ask if they are looking to adopt, if so talk to them about their situation, their family etc. As you get to know the dogs each week you may be able to advise dogs that would be a good fit for them. Until then, introduce them to a lead volunteer.

Ask questions – If someone asks you a question you are not sure of the answer to ask a lead volunteer and listen to the answer they give.

**BREAKING DOWN (SAT 5-6, SUN 4-5)**

About 30 mins before the end of the day please ensure that one person takes all of the water dishes out of the crates (if it is a dish that attaches to the crate ask someone to hold onto the dog while you take this off, do not try to block the door and take this off at the same time) Wash and dry all of the dishes and pack them away.

As fosters turn up help them get there fosters to their car, if they have a crate fold it up for them while they hold onto the dog and carry it out to the car for them if they need you to.

As animals leave clean out the crates, put the blankets and toys in laundry and any uneaten chews in the trash. Spray then wipe down the crate, fold it up and put it away. Please ensure it is put away safely (in the past we have had to many crates stacked on top of each other making it hard to get them down the next day and creating a safety concern), ask a lead volunteer about where it should go if you are unsure. On a Saturday sometimes we will leave the crates up (if this is ok with the manager) if this is the case make sure everything else is put away and the crates are still cleaned but they are not broken down, a lead volunteer will advise.

**GENERAL**

Please wear comfortable and appropriate clothing and sensible, flat shoes.

Please be polite and professional to everyone, we are there to find homes for animals and also create a good impression of our rescue and raise awareness to the public about how bad the problem is. They are not going to get the message if we look like we do not care and would rather be somewhere else!!

Do not bring too many personal items with you (we do not have enough space for all volunteers to store a purse safely) all you really need is your keys, phone and some cash for lunch, all of which could go in a pocket. Please be aware of putting your personal items away, it is not uncommon for people to have things stolen at adoption events because they have left them out.

Do not use your phone at the adoption area, this does not create a good impression. Walk away if you need to use your phone.

Please do not leave drinks, cans, food and food wrappers lying around the adoption area – remember we want people to focus on the animals and see our promotional material, not see a load of food wrappers and items lying around. For lunch please go to one of the places you can eat in the area, have your lunch and then come back. Do not sit and eat it around the animals.

Please let the lead volunteer, or if they are busy, another volunteer know when you are leaving, whether for lunch or at the end of your volunteer shift. This is to ensure they know how many volunteers are there throughout the day.