Kennel and Cattery Essential Capabilities of Idaho Humane Society Volunteers

In order to maintain a safe environment for our animals, the general public, staff and volunteers with essential care and enrichment, the Idaho Humane Society (IHS) has the following essential requirements for participation in the volunteer program when working with animals. Volunteers need to possess the following physical, mental, and emotional capacities. Your signature on this form indicates that you believe you possess these basic capabilities, with your written acknowledgement of any limitations.

At IHS, we strive to create an inclusive, welcoming environment and will make every reasonable effort to accommodate differently abled individuals. Individuals who do not possess the following basic capabilities may be asked to bring an assisting individual with them in order to volunteer. The assisting individual has to also become a volunteer with IHS and has also taken all required trainings in the kennel and/or cattery areas. In other cases, the volunteer may be required to only perform volunteer tasks that they are considered capable of safely accomplishing without assistance.

Essential Physical Capabilities

- Average vision (with or without correction) to move safely around the building, to be able to observe animal body language without difficulty, to be able to read notes on animals' paperwork, computer, or memos as needed
- Ability to speak and effectively communicate in English verbally as well as in written form
- Average reflexes and ability to use both hands simultaneously (example: open cage door while handling animal)
- Sufficient manual dexterity to prepare diets, handle small tools, open/close doors and cages
- Must not have strong allergies to cats or chemicals that can't be managed by medication
- Ability to hear and respond to feedback from others including staff members, patrons, and animals that are indicating fear, aggression, or pain
- Average strength to assist with lifting small to medium sized objects/animals
- Ability to tolerate a loud environment due to animal noises
- Ability to tolerate sometimes strong and unpleasant odors, fleas, feces, and possible wounds or injuries to animals in our care
- Must have sufficient physical endurance to accomplish certain physical tasks.

- Ability to walk unaided on unpaved, uneven, rugged and sometimes muddy and slippery exercise yard and lawn areas (when walking dogs outdoors)
- Ability to bend and squat to leash/harness and pick up an animal
- Ability to stand for significant periods of time while walking dogs, assisting the public with visits, or cleaning cages/kennels
- Ability to push carts and barrels of laundry; load and unload washer and dryer; fold clean laundry and put away, reaching shelves from ground level up

Essential Mental Capabilities

- Ability to understand, remember, and follow exact instructions and procedures
- Once trained, must be able to work independently with minimal supervision yet be able to recognize limitations and ask for help when needed
- Possess sufficient reading, writing, and communication skills (example: understand words such as quarantine, euthanize, and other common industry-related terms)
- Possess problem-solving capability
- Ability to be aware of and recognize potentially dangerous situations when working with animals and ability to
    - Remain calm with animals
    - Show good judgement by reacting sensitively, respectfully, and appropriately
- Ability to understand and accept the boundaries between the role of a volunteer and the role of a staff member

Essential Emotional Capabilities

- Ability to cope with unexpected animal behavior without assistance
- Ability to cope with a highly emotionally charged environment with some animals that are homeless, abandoned, and/or abused, as well as the reality that some of the animals in our care may be humanely euthanized
- Ability to understand IHS' policies and positions regarding all animals, animal control, and other key animal welfare issues and an ability and willingness to appropriately and accurately represent those policies when interacting with the public or otherwise representing IHS

- Ability to control the urge to play with/pet animals in isolation

Level of Supervision

If lacking the ability to work independently, whether due to age/cognitive ability/ physical ability, must be able to work alongside a parent/guardian/partner/case manager with a focused attention on the task at hand. This person must also complete all required volunteer training.

I understand the essential capabilities of Idaho Humane Society and I understand the level of supervision needed for me to volunteer with the Idaho Humane Society. If the Idaho Humane Society feels I need more supervision to volunteer, I understand that they will ask me to provide an assisting individual. If at any time the Idaho Humane Society doesn't feel I am capable of volunteering, I understand my volunteer position may be terminated or restricted.

Volunteer Name: _____
Signature of Parent: _____

Date: _____