

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

January 2022



 [fcnmhp.org](http://fcnmhp.org)

 [@fcnmhp](https://www.facebook.com/fcnmhp)

 904-425-0005



**Norwood Clinic:**  
6817 Norwood Ave.  
Jacksonville, FL 32208

**Cassat Hospital:**  
464 Cassat Ave.  
Jacksonville, FL 32254

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# INTRODUCTION LETTER

*January 2022*

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering with First Coast No More Homeless Pets. You have come to the right place to make a difference in the lives of people and the pets they love, and we are proud to have you on our team.

Volunteers are a vital part of our positive environment where we all share one common goal: decrease the number of dogs and cats entering shelters. We do this by providing affordable, accessible veterinary care to all who call upon us and reducing dog and cat overpopulation by operating one of the nation's largest spay/neuter clinics.

Sincerely,



**Jennifer Barker**

CEO, The Volunteer Board of Directors, and all the dogs and cats across our region.



# WELCOME LETTER

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering with First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP) and welcome to our Volunteer Team!

Volunteers play a critical role in carrying out our Mission to keep dogs and cats in their homes and out of shelters and to provide low-cost spay/neuter services with emphasis on feral/community cats.

Without our dedicated team of volunteers to assist with everything from Clinic Care to Laundry, from Food Bank to Front Desk, and everything in between, we simply would not be able to do what we do:

- Treat over 200 pets a day, 7 days a week in our vet clinics
- Perform over 20,000 spay and neuter surgeries annually
- Distribute 280,000 pounds of pet food annually to families in need at our Food Bank
- Help maintain a 90% or higher save rate in shelters and keep Jacksonville “no-kill”

We wish you an enjoyable, safe, fulfilling and rewarding volunteer experience!



**Jennifer Brownstein**  
*Volunteer Manager*  
904-520-7911

# FIRST COAST NO MORE HOMELESS PETS

*The mission of First Coast No More Homeless Pets is to make veterinary care affordable and accessible to all as we save lives by keeping dogs and cats in homes and out of shelters, provide low-cost spay/neuter services with emphasis on feral/community cats, and deliver a broad range of related programs and services.*

## WHAT WE DO

We operate one of the largest spay/neuter clinic in the country with more than 20,000 surgeries a year targeting the animals that are most at risk of straining our partner shelters.

First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP) helps people and their pets with quality, low-cost veterinary care through our sustainable industry leading programs, services and solutions. **We are not a shelter; we make shelters stronger** with a broad range of comprehensive programs like our Pet Food Bank, and low-cost or no-cost spay neuter programs, and pet retention programs.



### **Quality, Low-Cost Veterinary Services**

FCNMHP helps keep pets in homes by ensuring that pet owners can afford to spay/neuter their pets and get medical care that is less expensive than other veterinary hospitals and clinics. We also have many programs including SpayJax, Duval Cat Fix, Big Dog Fix and more to provide no or low-cost spay/neuter surgeries.



### **Spay and Neuter Services**

FCNMHP offers many no or low-cost spay/neuter services for dogs and cats, in our community. Additionally, we work in cooperation with many agencies and rescues in our area to reduce the pet population.



### **Feral Freedom**

In 2008, FCNMHP partnered with the Jacksonville, FL, public shelter to sterilize feral cats and release them back into their territory (Trap-Neuter-Return). Not only does this program save thousands of cats annually, but it is the most responsible and cost effective way to manage the feral cat population and has become a national model.



### **FCNMHP Pet Food Bank**

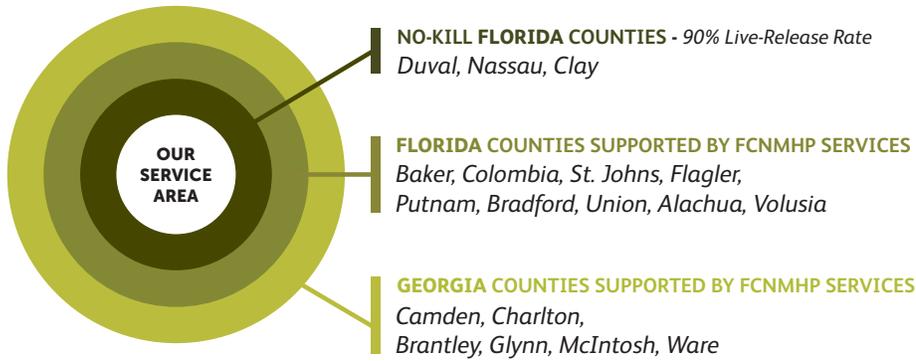
Some neighbors can scarcely afford to feed themselves, let alone their beloved pets. Thanks to this volunteer-driven program, we help make it easier for people to keep pets in homes and out of shelters. The Jacksonville Pet Food Bank has distributed more than 1.8 million pounds of food since it was started in 2012.

## WHY WE DO IT

Many of our clients, our neighbors, cannot afford traditional veterinary services. With our support, they can avoid the most heartbreaking of choices ranging from animal abandonment to economic euthanasia.



**Our 10,000 square mile service area:**



**2021 SURGERY NUMBERS**



**247**  
*Dental Procedures*



**75,694**  
*Vaccines*



**764**  
*Medical/Surgical Procedures*

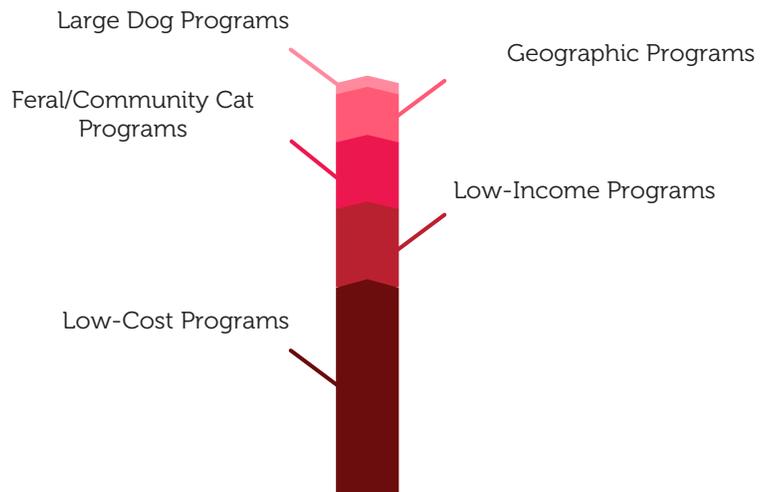


**23,070**  
*Spay/neuter surgeries*



**More than 20,000 surgeries per year.**

**2021 Spay/Neuter Programs:**



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## PURPOSE OF VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Volunteer policies and procedures are provided to offer guidance and direction to volunteers and to communicate organizational needs and expectations.

## POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

### VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

Most volunteer jobs run in 2- 4 hour shifts. If a volunteer is interested in an extended opportunity, please ask the Volunteer Manager.

### SIGNING UP FOR SHIFTS

ALL volunteers **are required** to sign up for their shifts in advance, using My Impact, our volunteer scheduling system. *This is extremely important!* Our busy team relies on the Volunteer Calendar to prepare for each day. When we know who is expected, the Front Office, Clinic and Food Bank can plan accordingly.

At Volunteer Orientation, all volunteers receive basic training on how to use My Impact as well as a step-by-step instructional handout.

ALL volunteers are also **required** to sign in *and* sign out **in person** for each volunteer shift. This is very important for two reasons. First, safety. In the unlikely event of an emergency, we need to account for everyone in the building. Second, we rely on these sign in sheets to keep track of the number of volunteers and volunteer hours served each month. This data is crucial in helping us secure grants and funding for our programs and operations.

The Volunteer Sign In Binder is located at the Front Desk. Please fill out ALL FIELDS completely so the data we collect is accurate.

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

You must begin volunteering within two weeks of completing Volunteer Orientation and are required to volunteer at least twice per month for the duration of your service in order to remain in the program.

## TRACKING VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service Volunteers are required to keep track of their own hours. *You are responsible* for accurately writing down the days and times of your volunteer shifts. The paperwork you submit for hours approval will be checked against the Volunteer Sign In Sheets. Credit will only be given to hours of actual volunteer service. If you do not track your own hours, don't sign in and out properly for shifts, or if you embellish the number of hours you worked, **Completion of Service signatures will not be granted.**

You must make an appointment with the Volunteer Manager for the sign off of Completion of Service. Walk-ins cannot be accommodated because the Volunteer Manager works between both facilities on any given day.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEER PRODUCTIVITY

We understand that you may need to take an important phone call or need a moment to use the restroom or drink water. This is perfectly ok!

However, please adhere to the following:

- Do not leave the facility for a break. We will assume you have left for the day.
- Do not overly engage the staff in conversation. We are a very busy facility.
- Stay productive! Sleeping, excessive cell phone use and/or long breaks are not permitted. **Community Service Hours will not be verified under these circumstances.**

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## SCHEDULING, HOURS AND TIME COMMITMENT

Our staff relies on volunteers to be here each week for their scheduled shift. We truly cannot be successful without our volunteers and the incredibly important role they play in keeping our facilities running properly. We function like a team, and rely on everybody to do their individual part. It is very important that you keep to your scheduled shift. We are a non-profit organization that truly depends on volunteers to help keep our facilities running.

We plan our weekly calendar of tasks based on the number of volunteers we have for each day.

- When we expect a volunteer on a particular day, at a particular time, and he or she does not show up, our schedule is seriously affected, as well as the welfare of the animals in our care.
- Please be sure to remove yourself from a shift if you are unable to make it.
- Please stay for the duration of your shift. If you must leave early, let your Lead know.
- Please be sure to call or email if you know that you are unable to make it for your shift.
- If shifts become sporadic or if we don't hear from you when you cannot make it, we may remove you from the volunteer roster.

## INACTIVITY

Volunteers who have not been active at our facilities for **6 months or longer and do not respond to inquiries about absence** are assumed to be no longer interested in volunteering and will be removed from the volunteer roster. Volunteers would then be required to contact the Volunteer Manager before volunteering again.

These measures are taken to ensure that volunteers are up-to-date on any policy changes or new procedures that have occurred in their absence.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation, understanding, and support.

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## PROPER DRESS AND ID BADGES

ALL volunteers are required to wear an ID Badge for the duration of their shift. This is to help the staff and the public distinguish between customers, employees and volunteers.

ID Badges are hanging on the wall next to the Volunteer Sign In Binder at the Front Desk.

Please remember that while volunteering, you are representing yourself as well as the organization. Volunteers are asked to *convey a professional public image*. Overall appearance should be clean and neat.

- Closed toed shoes are required.
- Wear comfortable clothes with freedom of movement.
- Sleeveless shirts, low cut tops and low riders are not appropriate.
- Hoop or dangling earrings represent a safety hazard and should not be worn.

If in doubt or you have questions about appropriate dress, check with the Volunteer Manager.

## PERSONAL ATTITUDE

### *Volunteers Must:*

- Take their commitment seriously
- Be willing to take direction
- Be flexible
- Agree to conduct themselves in a professional, respectful manner with the animals, co-workers and the public
- Be friendly, warm and courteous to the staff and the public and put them at ease
- Be neat and accurate
- Ask the staff for assistance with any questions to which you are not sure of an absolute correct answer
- Keep all client data confidential. No names of clients are to be discussed outside our organization
- Support FCNMHP's mission and policies inside the building as well as in the community
- Be honest with yourself and us concerning your needs, wishes and availability

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## **BREAKS**

For any shift lasting longer than four hours, volunteers are required to take a 30 minute break. Break areas are provided for that purpose at each facility.

Volunteers under 18 may not work more than eight hours in any 24 hour period.

## **VOLUNTEER PERSONAL PROPERTY**

FCNMHP is not responsible for loss, theft or damage of personal items.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

FCNMHP will not tolerate the possession of any non-prescribed or illegal drugs on our property or any adjacent property - other than OTC products. Any volunteer under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be escorted off of the property and law enforcement will be engaged as necessary.

## **SMOKING POLICY**

No smoking, or use of any tobacco product, is authorized inside our facilities.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

We are committed to providing volunteers with a safe, productive, and enjoyable environment and experience. FCNMHP will not tolerate any form of harassment among its employees and volunteers and encourages volunteers to bring any incident of harassment, in any form, to the immediate attention of the Volunteer Manager.

## **PERSONAL VEHICLES**

We ask that personal vehicles not be parked near the front door of the Norwood Clinic to allow easier access for our clients. At the Cassat Regional Veterinary Hospital, we ask that volunteers park by the administration building on the far south side of the parking lot.

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Staff may not transport volunteers in a personal vehicle. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to ride in a company vehicle with an employee. Volunteers are only covered by their personal automobile insurance while traveling to and from any volunteer service, event, or shift. Volunteers in personal vehicles are not covered by any automobile insurance carried by FCNMHP.

## **DRIVING A COMPANY VEHICLE OR OPERATING EQUIPMENT**

Volunteers are not authorized to operate any motorized equipment, including cars, trucks, mowers, forklifts or any other driving or riding device without specific permission from FCNMHP Management.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

FCNMHP's telephone lines are for business calls only.

## **VISITORS AND PERSONAL GUESTS**

- On duty volunteers are discouraged from receiving visitors, except in emergencies.
- Non-volunteers are not permitted to accompany volunteers while working at FCNMHP.
- Volunteers may not bring children while they are on duty, unless they are participating as Family Volunteers. (Please see "Age Qualifications" on page 5 for more information.)

## **MEDIA PROCEDURES**

The CEO will handle all media calls or requests. Media is anything that will be printed, broadcast, or televised about FCNMHP. If you choose to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine on behalf of FCNMHP please be sure you let us know in advance so we can verify facts and statistics (if any) that you might include in your letter.

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## **SOCIAL MEDIA PROCEDURES**

In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional. Remember, online communications are NEVER private. We expect volunteers to use good judgment regarding the organization in all situations.

Volunteers should not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential to the organization or its donors. Volunteers should never give out or transmit personal information of others such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, account numbers or other personal information. Volunteers should refrain from posting or publishing negative comments about the organization, or its associations. If volunteers have complaints, they should be brought to the Volunteer Manager and/or the CEO.

## **ACCIDENT REPORTING**

If an accident or injury occurs on the premises, it must be reported to the Volunteer Manager or other staff member immediately. An incident report must be completed for our files. Incident Reports can be found at the Front Desk.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

A volunteer relationship does not promise or imply future employment. Volunteers may not bring items for sale to staff or other volunteers, including youth fundraisers. All contracts are competitive and are not promised as part of any volunteer relationship.

## **TERMINATION POLICY**

Volunteers understand that there is no compensation offered as a volunteer at FCNMHP.

The Volunteer Manager or management may terminate a volunteer relationship at any time. In turn, a volunteer may terminate his or her relationship with FCNMHP at any time.

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

## **VOLUNTARY TERMINATION**

A volunteer may, at any time, choose to no longer volunteer. Sometimes a change in employment, work schedule or a family move can disrupt a volunteer's ability to continue. Sometimes, a volunteer is no longer interested in or is dissatisfied with the volunteer job he or she has been doing. Please be sure to let the Volunteer Manager know if you can no longer volunteer due to a scheduling conflict or if you would like to be reassigned to a new or different job. A new schedule or job assignment may be arranged!

## **INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION**

It is our intention to enjoy a happy and productive relationship with our volunteers. We take the role of volunteers in our organization very seriously. We know that they could spend their time doing other things in their lives and choose to donate that time (and energy and talent!) to us. In turn, we rely on competent, reliable and productive volunteers to help us maintain the highest of standards for our facility and to support our mission and organizational values.

In the unfortunate event that a volunteer does not share those standards and values or is unwilling to improve after coaching and/or retraining, termination may result. Termination is at the discretion of the Volunteer Manager or FCNMHP Management.

## **GROUNDINGS FOR DISMISSAL MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:**

- Gross misconduct or insubordination
- Reporting for a volunteer assignment under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- Theft of property or misuse of shelter funds
- Abuse or mistreatment of animals in our care
- Abuse or mistreatment of staff or other volunteers (verbal and/or physical)
- Releasing confidential information about the cats, staff, other volunteers, donors and/or adopters.
- Unwillingness to support or further the FCNMHP mission
- Failure (after coaching, counseling and re-training) to carry out tasks and procedures as assigned



# FIRST COAST NO MORE HOMELESS PETS - VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Please return this form in one of three ways:

Submit electronically | Email to [jbrownstein@fcnmp.org](mailto:jbrownstein@fcnmp.org) | Mail to 6817 Norwood Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32208

## **VOLUNTEER RELEASE, WAIVER AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

*My services are provided strictly in a voluntary capacity as a volunteer and without any express or implied promise of salary, compensation or other payment of any kind whatsoever. My services are furnished without any employment-type benefits, including employment insurance programs, worker’s compensation accrual in any form, vacations or sick time. I will familiarize myself and comply with First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP) policies and procedures applicable to volunteers. In particular, I fully understand that FCNMHP expects high standards of moral and ethical treatment of the animals under its care. I will adhere strictly to these standards in my capacity as a volunteer. I understand that FCNMHP, without notice or hearing, may terminate my services as a volunteer at any time, with or without reason. I understand that the handling of animals and other volunteer activities may place me in a hazardous situation and could result in injury to me or my personal property.*

*On behalf of myself and my heirs, personal representatives and assigns, I hereby release, discharge, indemnify and hold harmless First Coast No More Homeless Pets and its board members, directors, employees and agents from any and all claims, causes of action and demands of any nature, whether known or unknown, arising out of or in connection with my volunteer activities, even if the result of FCNMHP’s (or its employees’ and agents’) negligence or otherwise. I understand that my participation as a volunteer involves certain risks, including, but not limited to, serious injury and death. I am voluntarily participating as a volunteer with knowledge of the danger involved and I agree to accept all risks of participation.*

*I understand that this document is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the state in which the volunteering take place and agree that if any portion of this Agreement is invalid, the remainder will continue in full legal force and effect.*

*I also acknowledge that FCNMHP has not arranged and do not carry any insurance of any kind for my benefit or that of Volunteer (if I am under 18), my parents, guardians, trustees, heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns. I represent that, to my knowledge, I am in good health and suffer no physical impairment that would or should prevent my participation.*

*Understanding that public relations is an important part of a volunteer’s activities, I hereby authorize FCNMHP to use any photographs of me in its possession for public relations purposes. I ask that FCNMHP use reasonable efforts to give me advance notice of any such use, but such notification is not a condition to release photographs for public relations purposes.*

*I, the volunteer, do hereby understand and acknowledge that during my tenure as a volunteer with FCNMHP, I may have access to Confidential Information not generally known to the public concerning the business of FCNMHP. I, the volunteer, do hereby agree that during my tenure as a volunteer with FCNMHP and all times thereafter, I will hold FCNMHP Confidential Information in strict confidence, and will not disclose or use such information outside of the scope of my volunteer service with FCNMHP, or without FCNMHP’S prior authorization. For purposes of this Agreement, “Confidential Information” includes, but is not limited to, information regarding projects and potential projects, organizational practices, donors and potential donors, methodologies, management philosophy, and information concerning FCNMHP employees and volunteers. I, the volunteer, further agree and understand that I will immediately return all FCNMHP Confidential Information at the end of my tenure as a volunteer, or whenever requested by FCNMHP.*

*If between the age of 14-15 I will have my parent or guardian volunteer along side of me. (Parent or Guardian application must be submitted at the same time) 16-17 year olds must have their Volunteer Application signed by a parent.*

<b>Printed Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OVER THE AGE OF 21 (OF VOLUNTEERS 17 AND YOUNGER, MINIMUM AGE 14)</b>		

*As a parent or legal guardian of the above-named volunteer, I hereby give consent for my child or ward, as the case may be, to become a volunteer for First Coast No More Homeless Pets as described in the above Volunteer Agreement and Release and, by the signature below, join in and agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the above Volunteer Agreement and Release.*

<b>Parent/Guardian’s Printed Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
---------------------------------------	------------------	-------------

Parent’s Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank You!***

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT



I understand that this volunteer handbook replaces any and all prior verbal and written communications regarding FCNMHP working conditions, policies, appeals processes, and benefits

I have read and understand the contents of this handbook and will act in accord with these policies and procedures as a condition of our volunteer relationship.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the handbook, I will consult the Volunteer Manager.

Finally, I understand that the contents of this volunteer handbook are simply policies and guidelines, not a contract or implied contract with volunteers. The contents of the volunteer handbook may change at any time.

Please read this Handbook carefully to understand these conditions of volunteer service before you sign this document.

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*Printed Name*

*Signature*

*Date*

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*Parent/Guardian's Printed Name (if under 18)*

*Signature*

*Date*