



Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter

2200 7th Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062

580 Airport Boulevard, Watsonville, CA 95076

Phone: (831) 454-7200 Fax: (831) 454-7210

Melanie Sobel
General Manager

Interested in volunteering? You can make all the difference!

Volunteering can be an emotional experience but we've found that satisfaction and joy are the most common emotions volunteers have. Despite the overwhelming nature of sheltering - the endless flow of animals in need, the difficulty of seeing how poorly our fellow humans can treat companion animals, and the length of time some animals have to wait for their adoptive homes, to name a few - what you can bring to the animals in our care is fun, positive interactions, and Tender Loving Care. Who better to impart a sense of play and home than you, the animal-oriented members of our community?

How Do You Become a Volunteer?

The best place to start is with our website, www.scanimalshelter.org. You will find a lot of information about the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter and a section for volunteer information – **How You Can Help**. If you decide to pursue becoming a volunteer, **fill out the online application** to get started.
http://www.scanimalshelter.org/volunteer_application.

Process for becoming a volunteer:

- 1) **Orientation** - Once you complete the online volunteer application, **follow the link at the top of the application to register for a General Volunteer Orientation (GVO)**. GVO's are generally given twice a month and will give you an overview of the shelter and the volunteer program. Plan to arrive a few minutes early, as GVO's start on time and out of respect for other attendees the doors will close promptly. All orientations are held at 2200 7th Avenue in Santa Cruz.
- 2) **TLC Training** - At the orientation, you will be able to sign up for a Dog, Cat, or Rabbit TLC training class. These classes are two hours long and are given by experienced volunteers. As a new volunteer, we ask that you focus on one species, do all of the training and mentoring, and put in at least 10 hours of volunteer time with that species. Once you have done that, if you are interested in branching out to other species, talk to the volunteer program coordinator. She can sign you up for further training to develop and enhance your volunteer skills.
- 3) **Mentoring** – At the TLC training, you will be given a list of mentors who will help you complete the requirements for volunteering. Our mentors are experienced volunteers and are in the best position to instruct new volunteers with hands on training. Dog and Cat TLC volunteers must do at least one 2 hour mentoring session. At the end of your mentoring session(s), if your mentor feels you are ready, you will be signed off and ready to work on your own. At that point, you can schedule your shifts, using the Volgistics volunteer application, and welcome to volunteering at the SCCAS!

We request that new volunteers make a commitment to giving a minimum of two hours a week for the first six months. If you are unable to make that commitment, please reconsider your desire to become a volunteer at this time.

Once you become a volunteer, you will have many opportunities to continue to learn more about animal handling and behavior, sheltering, fostering, etc. through ongoing training classes. Classes will be announced through weekly volunteer updates, calendar posts, and on the website under Training and Events.

Age Requirements for Volunteering

You may volunteer to work hands on with the animals if you are 18 years of age or older. Young people, 13 – 17 years old, may work with the animals as long as they are partnered with a parent or adult AT ALL TIMES. The partner parent or guardian must also complete the orientation, training, and mentoring. The adult is the supervisor of the team.

Community Service for meeting a school requirement:

Young people who need to complete community service hours for school may volunteer for the SCCAS if the age requirements are met. Working hands on with the animals requires an adult volunteer to be present AT ALL TIMES. Students who can't meet the requirements to volunteer with the animals hands on can email the volunteer program coordinator to see if there are any other opportunities available. Since the majority of our volunteer opportunities include animal handling, we may not always be able to accommodate those looking for other kinds of volunteer work at the shelter.

The Most Common Volunteer Positions include:

Dog TLC – Play with, exercise, and socialize shelter dogs.

Cat TLC – Play with, exercise, snuggle and brush shelter cats.

Rabbit TLC – Play with, exercise, snuggle, and brush shelter rabbits, plus cleaning and feeding.

Animal Care – Help with laundry, wash dishes, provide animals with enrichment toys.

Foster Care – Provide care in your home for shelter animals that are sick, injured, underage, underweight, shy or suffering from kennel stress. Foster training is required before fostering. Learn more about fostering at <http://www.scanimalshelter.org/foster>

Office Assistant – Help shelter staff keep filing, copying, mailings, etc. under control. It's often the simple things that keep us running smoothly.

Due to the high volume of interest in our volunteer program, we ask that all inquiries be sent via email to ASA149@co.santa-cruz.ca.us. For those without email access, call 831-454-7202 for inquiries about volunteering.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter. Our volunteers make the lives of our shelter animals immeasurably better and are critical to what our shelter is able provide to the community. We look forward to working with you.