



2570 FM 878 ♦ Waxahachie, Texas 75165 ♦ 972-935-0756  
www.elliscountyspca.org

## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

1. What is the EC-SPCA and What do we do?
2. Why we are not a “No Kill” shelter
3. Basics of volunteering for the EC-SPCA
  - a. Mission Statement
  - b. Goals
  - c. Polite, Punctual, Neat and Nice
  - d. Name Tag --- Required and cost \$4.00 please order promptly.  
We need to identify you as a volunteer.
4. Areas of Volunteering: Dog/Cat TLC, adoption counseling, clerical, special events, foster parents, laundry, fundraising, cleaning, cleaning, cleaning.
5. Festival and Special Events – These are scheduled with volunteers a week or two before the event via e-mail. We will be posting information on our NEWS page of the website if you have internet access but not an e-mail address.

***Many animal diseases are airborne and can be transmitted to your pets at home through your clothing and shoes. Be sure that your pets are ALWAYS up to date on their vaccinations to keep them safe.***



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### **WHAT IS THE EC-SPCA?**

SPCA stands for Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to animals. We are not the “pound” and we are not affiliated with other SPCA’s. We are a private non-profit organization and we do not receive funding from any other animal welfare services or any other SPCA.

Our first priority is to increase adoptions of unwanted animals by offering them a second chance for life in a loving home but we also provide various services including the education and importance of spay/neuters.

We have contracts with the City of Ennis and with the County Sheriff’s Office to bring us all of the homeless animals that they pick up. The County Sheriff’s Office patrols areas in Ellis County that are not part of a city limit. Most cities have their own animal control and some sort of a city pound.

We rely on these contracts and donations from the community to care of the unfortunate animals. We are fortunate to have the support of *Science Diet* at our shelter and they supply us with all of our dog/cat food (including starter bags of food that are given with each adoption). This is important for the cost benefit and because the majority of our pet population is homeless and under nourished.

After they are brought to us, we check tags and scan for microchips to try to contact their owners. If there is not any information available, we hold them for 72 hours to give the owners a chance to locate them. When the 72 hours is up, a member of the staff will evaluate the animal and make the decision if the dog/cat should go up for adoption, be placed with a rescue group, or if they will need to be put down. Some animals come to us sick, hurt or with a bad temperament that causes them to be “unadoptable”.



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## WHY WE ARE NOT A “NO KILL” SHELTER

1. No Kill shelters limit the type and number of animals that they take in based on their “adoptability”.
2. Animals that are turned away from these types of shelters must still go somewhere – so the term “no kill” means that they do not perform euthanasia at their facility. We want to help the MAJORITY and cannot limit which homeless animals are brought to us.
3. We do not set a maximum amount of time we will keep an animal up for adoption. Decisions about euthanasia are based on the adoptability of the animal and the space available to humanely house the animal at the shelter. Rather than setting a time limit, we strive to ensure that he/she remains healthy and adoptable. If the animal becomes stressed, aggressive, or sick at the shelter, or if space becomes a problem, euthanasia may be considered.
4. It is estimated that animal shelters care for between 6–8 million dogs and cats every year in the United States, of whom 3–4 million are euthanized. There are simply not enough responsible homes for all of these wonderful, innocent animals. At this point in time, it would be impossible to humanely house every unwanted animal in the United States.
5. **HSUS Statement:** The HSUS believes that limited-admission animal shelters, commonly called “no kill” shelters, can play a role in helping homeless companion animals find responsible, lifelong homes. However, since these shelters are limited in the number of animals they can accept and care for, we feel strongly that there needs to be an animal shelter whose doors are open to all homeless animals in every community. Too often, stray animals suffer from starvation, disease, poisoning, abuse, injuries from traffic accidents, attacks by wildlife, and severe weather. If not spayed or neutered, they bring more innocent animals into their world of suffering.

The HSUS believes that humane euthanasia of homeless companion animals is preferable to the harsh lives and slow, painful deaths they face when they must fend for themselves outdoors. Millions of dogs and cats enter shelters every year in the United States, but according to the best estimates available, only about 50% (3-4 million) of these animals are adopted. Currently, it would be impossible to humanely keep all of these homeless animals in shelters.



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## **BASICS OF VOLUNTEERING**

Thank you for your interest in the Ellis County SPCA (ECSPCA) Volunteer Program.

*Our Mission Statement: To offer compassion and a second chance to unwanted, abandoned or mistreated animals and to provide programs that will promote and encourage responsible pet ownership.*

The goals for this organization are: To have the funding and support to maintain our animal care center; to increase spay/neuters; to increase the adoptions of homeless animals, and to promote responsible pet ownership.

The amount of time that you put into volunteering is up to you. Some people volunteer every Wednesday morning in the cat room, some do Saturday afternoon during adoptions, and others just do special events and fundraising. It does help us to have volunteers on a schedule so we don't have too many people at one time and not enough at others. For festivals and special events, we schedule volunteers for very specific times and normally "work" 2 hour shifts.

We ALWAYS need to project a positive image to the community so we ask that volunteers are Polite, Punctual, Neat and Nice. We require volunteers to wear name badges at all special events and whenever you are at the animal care center. This identifies you as a volunteer to the public and to staff members. **We will order you a name badge when you sign up to volunteer at your cost of \$4.00 per badge. It is your responsibility to keep up with your name badge and to have it on while volunteering.**

### Volunteer Opportunities:

*Dog and/or Cat TLC*

*Adoption Counseling*

*Clerical*

*Foster Parents*

*Newsletters and mail outs*

*Dog Walking*

*Off-Site Adoptions*

*Special Events*

*Fundraising*

*Laundry and/or Cleaning*

*All volunteers must be 18 years of age or older to volunteer at the shelter unless accompanied by an adult or guardian. The exception to this is in our fundraising/event program where we can (with parent approval) have high school aged kids volunteer on their own as long as their parents have agreed to it and they have been trained by the Event Coordinator either before or during an event.*

## **Ellis County SPCA** **Festival & Special Events**

- DEFINITION**      *Represents the EC-SPCA at various festivals and community events by running a booth with information about our animal care center as well as pet related brochures. Also sells merchandise, accepts donations and gives information on the organization.*
- COMMITTEE**      *This committee is part of the public relations arm of the EC-SPCA – a goodwill ambassador reaching the public in an effort to educate them about our organization and the animals/special programs that we have available.*
- VOLUNTEERS**      *Volunteers usually work 2 hour shifts – occasionally it may require a little more time, but we will do our best to make sure there are enough people to cover each event. You will “work” with at least one other person and possibly more depending on the size of the event. Volunteers must wear their name badge to every event. Try to arrive a few minutes early for your designated shift to go over information about the event from the outgoing shift volunteers.*
- QUESTIONS**      *If someone asks a question you don’t know the answer to, don’t guess – tell them you don’t know but if they want to leave their name and number, someone will call them back, or give them the Executive Director’s business card and have them call the shelter directly. Our general brochure has all of the contact information listed on it.*
- WHAT TO DO**      *Some people may never visit our facility, so whatever impression they get about the EC-SPCA could be based on you alone. Be polite, always say thank you for every single donation – be it \$1 or \$100. Do not “badger” visitors or try to talk them into buying something. Be informative of what we have and show off the merchandise if they seem interested. Visit with them about our needs and offer them a brochure, “Wish List” and other information to take with them. Even if they don’t buy anything or make a donation, thank them for stopping by – they may come back.*
- MONEY**      *We will have “Start Up” money available for each event – so we should always have sufficient change available. We do take checks, but not credit or debit cards. All donations will go in the donation canister and merchandise money goes into a money bag. Keep an eye on the donation canister and if it starts to get too full – change out some of the smaller bills for larger ones in the money bag.*

## **Ellis County SPCA**

### **Adoptions**

- DEFINITION**      *The process of matching the appropriate pet with the appropriate lifestyle. Interviewing a prospect and assessing the situation for the best possible adoption for the prospect and the pet.*
- PURPOSE**      *To insure successful adoptions to help limit the number of returned animals by: educating prospective adopters on proper pet care, stressing the need for gentle, reinforced, & consistent training, and the importance of keeping current identification on all pets.*
- 1<sup>st</sup> STEP**      *Prior to visiting with any customer, walk the kennels and the cat condos to familiarize yourself with the animals available for adoption. You also want to find out if there are any specials being offered on particular animals.*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> STEP**      *Greet the prospective adopter and introduce them to the Center. Begin by asking them if they came to look for a new companion or did they just want to visit the animals? Ask if they have a particular kind of animal in mind (breed, size, age, etc.). Do they have children or other pets?*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> STEP**      *When they have picked out an animal – take them outside or in the break room to visit with the animal. This would be a good time to discuss breed personality, temperament, care requirements, activity level, housebreaking techniques, introducing new pets into the home, the need for vaccinations, heartworm preventative, flea and tick control, etc.*
- 4<sup>th</sup> STEP**      *Have the prospective adopter fill out a PRE-ADOPTION Questionnaire and go over anything you have questions on. For instance – where will the animal sleep, what will you do with the animal if you go on vacation, how do you feel about spay/neuter. All of these questions will be covered with you during adoption training to let you know what answers to look for.*
- 5<sup>th</sup> STEP**      *Counsel the prospective adopter on their answers and SPCA policies. It is very important not to rush the potential adopter. Avoid any comments intended to play on an adopter's emotions in order to get them to adopt a certain animal.*
- 6<sup>th</sup> STEP**      *If all answers are satisfactory, move on to the adoption and spay/neuter contracts. If you have any questions before moving forward – consult with a staff member.*

## Suggested Inquiries an Adoption Counselor May Make

1. **Do you own or rent?** A person who owns a home has only the restrictions of income and lifestyle, while a person who rents may have restriction of landlord approval, pet deposit and weight limitations.
2. **May we contact your landlord?** A “no” answer MUST be investigated. Many landlords do not allow pets and a person who tries to circumvent the rules and “sneak” one in usually ends up bringing the pet back. Many rental properties have strictly enforced weight limits (and some will only allow declawed cats).
3. **Have you had a pet before? What kind?** Do they know the basic care needed for a cat or dog? With someone who has never owned a pet, it’s important that we point out the responsibility of pet ownership and give them basic care information.
4. **Do you still have the pet?** If “no” why not? Did it grow too big? Did it develop bad habits? Did they get tired of it? All of these responses should be investigated. If someone wants a puppy but had an adult dog they got rid of because it got too big, they’ll most likely do the same again.
5. **Why do you want a pet?** Cats are adopted to be a cherished pet, not a “mouser”; and dogs are adopted to be a part of the family and a loved companion, not to be “guard dogs”. We want people to care for and love their pets, so we look for responses that indicated this.
6. **How many adults and children are in the household?** Translated, how many people are around when the animal need attention and care?
7. **Who will be primarily responsible for the new pet?** Who is going to take care of feeding, veterinarian visits, grooming, etc. Children usually need an adult to help them with these chores and to step in when needed.
8. **Where will the pet be kept during the day and at night?** We encourage all cat owners to keep their cat indoors. A dog may stay in a fenced yard as long as there are proper accommodations for the animal. However, we do prefer the animal be an indoor/outdoor pet so that it has daily interaction and attention from the family. Puppies should NEVER be adopted to be outside only.
9. **Do you have a yard, what size, is it fenced, what height is the fence?** These questions need to be considered when making the decision as to the kind of dog that would be best for the adopter. Remember, that a little puppy may grow up to be a big dog.
10. **Do you go out of town?** They need to understand that their pet need attention and care when they go out of town and arrangements will need to be made for their care. If they travel a great deal, the cost of this care may become expensive, and being left alone many be too stressful for the animal.
11. **Are you prepared for the cost of feeding your new pet?** It takes money to feed your pet and these costs can be considerable. All pets require additional vaccinations and if adopting a puppy or kitten, it will require additional vaccinations during its first year. Some pets require professional grooming in order to look their best. Are you prepared and willing to take care of these expenses?
12. **Are you willing to be responsible for your pet for its entire life?** Pets are living healthier and longer lives. Some dog’s can live to 15 years of age or longer. Cats can live even longer, some as long as 20 years plus. Are you willing to make this commitment?

# ELLIS COUNTY SPCA SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

## ANIMAL ADOPTIONS

### GOAL

The Ellis County SPCA's adoption goals are to place animals in permanent homes where they will be given a healthy and quality way of life.

### POLICY

An individual, 18 years of age or older, may adopt an animal from the Ellis County SPCA under the following conditions:

1. The animal is available for adoption by Ellis County SPCA.
2. The prospective adopter has proper facilities to care for the animal.
3. The prospective adopter agrees to have the animal spayed or neutered by (4) four months of age or within thirty (30) days after adoption, or under special directions of a Veterinarian. **(Note: Chapter 828 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, which requires that animals adopted from a shelter be spayed/neutered. Failure to do so is a criminal offense punishable as a Class C Misdemeanor.)**
4. The Ellis County SPCA has the right to refuse an adoption.
5. Animals cannot be adopted as gifts. Gift certificates are available; however an adopter with a gift certificate must still meet the criteria of the adoption policy.
6. Cats/kittens will be adopted as indoor pets only. This prevents exposure to outdoor hazards such as illness and injury.
7. Dogs/puppies will go to homes with a fenced yard only. Exceptions can be made for smaller dogs going to apartment homes.
8. It is the Ellis County SPCA's recommendation that families with young children adopt puppies 20 pounds and over, and kittens (3) three months of age or older.
9. A \$50 non-refundable deposit can hold an animal up to the close of the next business day so that the prospective adopter can have time to prepare for the animal, or for other family members to meet the animal. A hold can be placed on an individual animal one time only. ***If the animal is adopted, the \$50 can be applied toward the adoption fee of the animal.***

## **PROCEDURE**

1. The prospective adopter will satisfactorily fill out questionnaire/application.
2. The prospective adopter will present driver's license, or picture ID.
3. The prospective adopter will provide pet agreement from landlord (if renting).
4. The prospective adopter will sign adoption and sterilization contracts.
5. The prospective adopter will pay necessary fees.
6. The prospective adopter will provide the Ellis County SPCA proof that the animal has been sterilized as set out in the contract within the time frame allotted.
7. Known information regarding the animal will be used in helping make a successful match between a prospective adopter and an animal.
8. All adoptions are subject to approval by the adoption counselor/shelter supervisor on duty.

## **ADOPTION FEES – Subject to change**

Included in the adoption fees are rabies vaccinations, and other vaccinations and tests, which are listed on the adoption contract, for both dogs and cats.

### **DOGS**

\$80 – Purebred dogs (no papers), dogs 20 lbs. and under even if not spayed/neutered, puppies under (6) six months of age, and dogs that have been spayed/neutered.

\$65 - Dogs over 20 lbs. and not spayed/neutered.

\$50 – VIP dogs which have been available for adoption longer than 30 days, and those classified as senior dogs, or with special needs.

### **CATS**

\$75 – Cats/kittens that have been spayed/neutered.

\$50 – Cats/kittens not spayed/neutered.

*\$45 – Cost of (2) two kittens during kitten season.*

\$30 – VIP cats, which have been available for adoption for longer than 30 days, and those classified as senior cats or with special needs.