

Job Description

Position: Behavior Program Coordinator

Summary: Oversees enrichment and behavior modification programs for animals in the shelter and in foster homes; performs, and trains staff to perform, canine behavior assessments; communicates with other shelters and rescue organizations; provides adoption counseling and post-adoption support regarding behavioral issues.

Direct Supervisor: Director of Operations

Essential functions:

- Develops and implements enrichment solutions and behavior plans for animals in shelter to enrich their environment, reduce stress, and improve or maintain behavior and adoptability.
- Conducts behavior evaluations and assessments, including the SAFER canine behavior assessment, and makes placement recommendations based on these assessments.
- Identifies management solutions for animals in shelter to prevent behavior concerns and to maximize staff and volunteer safety; works closely with staff and volunteers to monitor behavior on an ongoing basis during the animal's time in the shelter.
- Writes behavior waivers for animals displaying higher-risk behaviors.
- Participates in euthanasia decisions to manage risks to staff, volunteers, and the community; assist in developing and updating guidelines for making these decisions.
- Trains staff on behavior assessments, enrichment activities and behavior modification techniques.
- Works with the foster department to identify and place shelter animals in appropriate foster homes.
- Assists fosters with behavior support to improve adoptability while in foster care.
- Manages the canine enrichment and behavior modification volunteer program; coordinates the education and training of volunteers who work with the shelter dogs.
- Works with other departments to develop, improve, and maintain programs within the shelter that are up-to-date with current behavior recommendations.
- Provides referral information and advice on animal behavior issues, training methods, and training equipment.
- Dispenses informational materials, articles, and videos to staff and volunteers to further their understanding of animal body language and behavior.
- Accurately describes animals to the public, including potential adopters and other shelters and rescue organizations, using objective characteristics and behaviors.
- Identifies candidates for transfer and communicates with rescue partners.
- Provides input in evaluating potential adoptive homes when appropriate, and communicates with the applicant in such a manner that maintains a courteous and friendly attitude.
- Assists in developing informative materials on preventing problem behaviors in the home.
- Follows up with adopters regarding post-adoption behavior.
- Participates in continuing education to enhance knowledge of animal behavior and training.
- Treats all animals humanely, properly, and with compassion at all times, regardless of the situation or circumstance and promote a humane and caring attitude toward all animals.
- Works courteously and cooperatively with other staff members and volunteers.
- Attends staff meetings and trainings.
- Keeps current with shelter events and program updates.
- Complies with established protocols regarding operation of the shelter.
- Interacts professionally and compassionately in person and on the phone with members of the public, including volunteers, fosters, and potential adopters.
- Ensures that equipment and materials are properly used and maintained.
- Travels between shelter locations as needed.
- Fills in for other areas and performs other tasks as needed, including at special events.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- High school diploma or general education degree.
- Demonstrated knowledge of animal behavior and enrichment, and at least three years of experience working with animals in a shelter setting; or equivalent combinations of education and experience.
- Thorough knowledge of animal behavior modification and evaluation techniques, including learning theory.
- Skilled in animal handling and restraint techniques.
- Ability to read and comprehend written instructions.
- Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Ability to effectively and professionally communicate with co-workers, volunteers, and the general public.
- Basic understanding of MS Office; ability to learn and use PetPoint software.
- Ability to remain pleasant and calm even in stressful situations.

Certificates, licenses, registrations:

- CPDT or other certification from a nationally-recognized certifying body that endorses the methods recommended by of the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB).
- Valid Oregon Driver's license required.

Physical demands:

- Ability to coordinate eyes and limbs to perform movements requiring skill and training, such as performing behavior assessments and modification activities.
- Ability to recognize and identify degrees of similarities or differences between characteristics of colors, shapes, sounds, odors and textures associated with job-related objects, materials and tasks.
- Ability to exert moderate but not constant physical effort, typically involving some combination of stooping, bending, kneeling, sitting, standing, crouching, and lifting, carrying objects and handling animals.
- Ability to sustain physical activity and concentration as required to complete tasks.
- Ability to safely and humanely restrain and handle animals of moderate-to-significant weight and strength.

Work environment:

- Work is performed in an animal shelter with shared office space. Potential for exposure to zoonotic diseases, dangerous and fractious animals, high noise levels, hazardous chemicals, anesthetics and sharp objects. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly exposed to noxious odors, fumes, and airborne particles (including allergens such as animal fur and dander); toxic or caustic chemicals; and potentially volatile situations which can present risk of violence or injury. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate to loud.
- Allergic conditions, which could be aggravated when handling or working with animals, may be a disqualification.