



Volunteer Clinic Guidelines

Clinic Guidelines

Volunteer commitment is vital to our efficiency. These guidelines summarize our clinic volunteer procedures and policies. A rabies vaccination is required for any volunteer who will have contact with the cats, and is recommended for all volunteers.

Before the Clinic

If you can't attend a clinic that you have signed up for, please notify us as soon as possible so a replacement can be arranged.

Orientation

- ◆ Please review the orientation materials that we provide to you after we receive your volunteer application.

Dressing Appropriately

The nature of the work we do at our clinics may result in soiling your clothing. Please dress appropriately:

- ◆ Operation Catnip scrub tops are required. They distinguish volunteers from visitors. Scrub tops can be purchased; all proceeds support cat surgeries. If you cannot afford a scrub top, you may borrow a loaner for the day.
- ◆ Long pants and closed toed shoes are required.
- ◆ Long hair should be pulled back.



Checking in to a Clinic

Volunteers must sign in (and sign out) at the clinic Check In station to participate.



- ◆ Please provide current contact information and your rabies vaccination status on the Volunteer Sign-In & Release Form provided for your volunteer category.
- ◆ Pick up your clinic station assignment and nametag, and report to your station. New volunteers will be escorted to their stations.
- ◆ Arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled start time to review the station assignment instructions kept at each station and to meet your fellow volunteers.
- ◆ Read the clinic station instructions carefully before each clinic, even if you have worked that station before. The instructions are updated periodically, and the contents may have changed. Even minor changes are important.

During the Clinic

Touching and Handling Cats

If you are NOT vaccinated for rabies:

- ◆ Do NOT touch or otherwise handle cats even if they are familiar.
- ◆ Do NOT stick fingers in cages for any reason.
- ◆ If a cat vomits and is conscious, tip cage forward and call for a rabies-vaccinated volunteer for assistance.

If you ARE vaccinated for rabies, never handle cats that are awake; only ones that are unconscious. Cats are anesthetized inside their traps.



Working with Your Station Team

Each station has a captain who coordinates the work flow and trains new volunteers.

- ◆ If you are uncertain about any of the requirements of the station, please ask your captain for further instruction.
- ◆ Wear your nametag at all times. This identifies you as a volunteer, and makes it easier for everyone to communicate more efficiently. Your rabies vaccination status is indicated by the color of the nametag (green if vaccinated, red if not).
- ◆ Wear gloves at all times to protect against infectious diseases the cats may carry. This applies to all volunteers, including those in administrative or other “no-cat-contact” volunteer roles.
- ◆ Several stations require that the gender of the cats be verified. If anyone cannot distinguish a female cat from a neutered male cat— ask for clarification. Neutered or cryptorchid males will not have visible testicles. A male cat sent for abdominal surgery endangers the cat and wastes resources.
- ◆ Never leave a station unattended, as this puts the cats at risk. Remain at your station at all times to avoid confusion unless instructed otherwise.
- ◆ Have fun and take pride in your contribution for the day. Operation Catnip volunteers are a wonderful and devoted family who work very hard together to make our community a better place for cats.

Taking Breaks

Stagger your breaks with other volunteers as needed to maintain coverage of your station. Please remain in the clinic area when on break.

Reporting Bites & Scratches

Never handle a conscious cat. In the event of a scratch or bite, inform your





captain and the Clinic Coordinator. Cat bites and scratches can cause significant health problems, including severe infection and death. Injuries are recorded in the clinic incident log, reported to the UF security office, and the injured volunteer is sent for medical care.

After the Clinic

- Clean the station at the end of the clinic. The room is used for surgeries during the week and is on loan for the day only. We strive to leave the area cleaner than when we arrived. Ask the Volunteer Coordinator how you can participate in cleaning of the common areas.
- Let us know if you have ideas about how we can improve or if you notice any supplies or equipment that is needed.

In Case of an Emergency

A Cat Has Escaped

Cats can escape from traps. Take precautions and make sure you are familiar with how a trap functions before handling them.

- ◆ If a cat escapes yell, “shut all doors - cat loose!”
- ◆ DO NOT touch the cat - there’s a net at the anesthesia station that will be used by the Clinic Supervisor or Medical Director.

A Cat is Not Breathing

Always watch the cats to make sure they are breathing normally

- ◆ If a cat doesn’t appear to be breathing yell, “Not breathing!” right away
- ◆ Rush cat to the “Crash Cart” in the surgery area

Fire or Other Emergency



Emergency phones are located in halls. Dial 352-294-4444 for security and/or 911 as appropriate.

- ◆ Follow evacuation instructions over PA system
- ◆ Fire extinguishers are located in hallways