



Dogs Training Manual

Saving Lives.
Finding Homes.
Inspiring Compassion.

www.buttehumane.org

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**Disclaimer - This manual is subject to change without notice. For the most current information visit www.buttehumane.org or contact the Volunteer Programs Manager at meaghanjohnson@buttehumane.org, or (530)343-7917 ext. 307*

Welcome

Welcome to the wonderful world of dogs! By this time you have already learned the basic ins-and outs of Butte Humane Society and now it's your chance to become familiar with how dogs are cared for and handled at the shelter. This training manual and associated training courses will give you the knowledge and tools you need to enrich the daily lives of dogs housed at Butte Humane Society and help them find loving homes.

As a volunteer, you are committing to help Butte Humane Society fulfill its mission. The service you provide our animals is incredibly valuable, and the BHS staff is here to support you every step of the way. If at any point during your service, you have questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding any animal at the shelter, please do not hesitate to contact any of the staff.

Thank you for signing up to volunteer with us and improve the lives of homeless pets. We strive to make your experience as a volunteer as enjoyable, educational, and rewarding as possible.

Dog Walking Levels

The most important thing to remember while volunteering with dogs is that **these are not your dogs**. As wonderful as these dogs are, few of them have experienced a normal home environment recently, had proper positive training, or experienced proper socialization while puppies. They need love and patience from compassionate volunteers like you.

Dog Walking Level System

All of our dogs have been designated as one of several levels. These levels represent different degrees of handling ability and experience required to work with them. Because of this, you will hear volunteers be referred to by the level at which they qualify (e.g. "Sam is new, she is a Level 1A volunteer").

Level 1 A Dogs

- Green kennel tags
- 0-24 hours.
- Dogs who are easily walked, well socialized with people and do not have medical or behavioral challenges.
- All adult volunteers are automatically permitted to walk these dogs upon successful completion of the Shadow Shift (See Shadow Shift in Orientation Packet).

****Only walk dogs you are comfortable with****

Level 1 B Dogs

- Pink kennel tags
- 25-35 hours volunteering walking dogs.
- Slightly more difficult to walk than a 1A dog, may be dog reactive, shy with harnessing, etc.

Level 2 Dogs

- Orange kennel tags
- Requires 35+ hours of volunteering walking dogs consistently
- Challenging behavior, difficult to harness/exit kennels/walk on leash.

- Successful completion of Level 2 training is required for volunteers to handle these dogs. ▪
Require more sophisticated handling.

Medical

- Blue kennel tags
- Volunteers must complete 25 hours with dogs prior to walking any medical dogs. ▪
Dogs who have medical restrictions, for example:

- Heartworm Positive Dogs
- Exercise restrictions
- Under-vaccinated dogs

Play Groups/Tandem Walks

- For experienced, confident volunteers
- 35 hours of volunteer time is required to partake in Play Group training.
- Successful completion of Play Group training with a staff member in adoptions is required for volunteers to participate in Play Groups or Tandem Walks.
- Level 2 Volunteers only

**Subjective advancement could occur in more or fewer than the standard hours' requirement depending on staff's comfort level with your ability and methods of handling dogs. Getting to know adoptions staff could help increase the likelihood of early advancement.*

The level codes are more for YOU, the volunteer, than they are for adopters. A dog's level is not indicative of how the dog will be in a home. Remember, dogs tend to behave differently in a shelter environment than they do in a home; which is why we all work so hard to help them find their homes.

Safety

Safety and Well-Being are Top Priorities

Safety when handling animals is a top priority at Butte Humane Society. The shelter environment can be very stressful and shelter dog behavior can be unpredictable. Maintaining animal well-being and working with minimal restraint is optimal, but the safety of volunteers and staff always comes first.

What to do if you are injured while Volunteering

Volunteers who are injured while providing service for Butte Humane Society (either on or offsite) must report their injuries to the nearest staff member and to the Volunteer Programs Manager immediately. A witness statement must be filled out for any major injury or wound involving broken skin. Any scratch that breaks the skin or animal bite, where animal saliva has come in contact with broken skin, by law, must be documented and reported to animal control. **Concealing injury or failing to report accidents is HIGHLY discouraged and could result in being prohibited from volunteering with BHS.**

**A Safety Data Sheet is available in the Dog Adoptions office.*

Who should handle dogs at the Humane Society?

- 🐾 Only volunteers who have successfully completed the initial Dog Shadow Shifts are eligible to handle dogs at Butte Humane Society.
- 🐾 Junior Volunteers (12 to 15 years of age) are permitted to socialize with approved dogs in their kennels with a parent or guardian present. They cannot walk any dogs on their own. The parents or guardian must have control of the harnessing and leash at all times.
- 🐾 **Adopters and members of the public are not permitted to handle our dogs without staff consent.** If an adopter is interested in a dog you are walking, put them in contact with a staff member or an approved Volunteer Ambassador. You can also refer them to our website at www.buttehumane.org to view our adoptable dogs, fill out an application, and make an appointment to meet that dog. Always keep dogs away from small children.

Rules of Paw

These are rules that we ask you to follow at all times for your safety as well as the safety of the animals. If you have questions about any of our Rules of Paw, please feel free to ask Butte Humane Society staff. As a Volunteer Dog Handler, we expect you to use common sense when working with animals. It is impossible to train you for every situation that might arise during your volunteer service but we hope this training will provide you with the necessary tools to help you think quickly and practice good judgment.



We also hope you will take the initiative to ask questions and take advantage of continuing education opportunities offered by the Humane Society staff throughout your volunteer service. **If you are ever unsure about handling an animal, please contact a Mentor volunteer or member of Butte Humane Society staff immediately so they can assist you.**

Cross-Contamination Protocol, Aggression, and Injury

- 🐾 Follow cross-contamination protocols for puppies. They will be clearly labeled “Unvaccinated/Under vaccinated Puppy.”
- 🐾 Use booties and gloves to socialize in the unvaccinated/under-vaccinated puppies’ kennels.
- 🐾 Ask permission from staff before entering their kennel.
- 🐾 Dogs that are contagious cannot be interacted with at all. (*Kennel cough, etc.*)
- Report any unusual or aggressive behavior to a staff member immediately.
- Report any minor medical issues to a Dog Adoptions staff.
- Report any major medical issues to a staff member immediately.
- VERY IMPORTANT:** Never hide an injury! Any bites or scratches by an animal at the shelter which break the surface of the skin and draw blood, whether accidental or not, are to be reported immediately to

BHS staff. The animal must be quarantined for 10 days; this does not mean the animal will be euthanized.

- The observation period is a precaution against rabies, which is not common but is 100% fatal once a person exhibits symptoms

Do not allow dogs to meet any other dog either face to face or through a fence, unless you've been properly trained in Play Groups and Tandem Walks. This is a safety precaution. You never know if the other dog is sick or friendly, and even "friendly" dogs don't necessarily like every dog they meet.

If a dog is loose on shelter property alert BHS staff immediately.

Junior Volunteers

Junior Volunteers are volunteers 12 to 15 years old. They are identified by a royal blue or red volunteer shirt. These volunteers must be accompanied by an adult who is also an official volunteer. This is a great opportunity for families to volunteer, spend time together, and do good for others. **No more than four Junior Volunteers per one adult volunteer will be accepted.**

While the adult has all the official status and privileges of regular volunteers, Junior Volunteers have some limitations. Mainly, they are not permitted to walk any dogs *or handle chemicals*, but they are instrumental when helping with:



- Kennel presentation
- Kennel enrichment
- Socializing approved dogs
- Socializing approved cats
- Etc.

Mentor Volunteers

Mentors are volunteers who go above and beyond to help the organization run smoothly so that it can better serve the needs of the homeless animals in our community.

Mentors are trusted volunteers that fully embody the image and mission of BHS. They can be relied upon to make decisions regarding interactions between the animals in our care and other volunteers. Mentors are intended to offer tips, guidance, and encouragement to other volunteers to reduce any confusion and anxiety and to build confidence in BHS protocol and the handling of animals.

To become a Mentor, a volunteer must have at least 35 hours of volunteer time within a four month period in the area for which they wish to be a Mentor. The volunteer must have a strong understanding of department protocols and be confident in their ability to handle animals. If you are interested in becoming a Mentor, please let Adoptions staff know. Dog mentors are also responsible for leading new volunteers on Mentor Walks, and at times, leading new volunteer shadow shifts.

Mentor Walks



The Mentor Walk is a valuable resource for new and returning volunteers. A lot of information is unloaded on you when you first start volunteering. This is a great opportunity to slow things down, internalize that information, and develop good habits before forgetting everything you've learned.

The Mentor Walk is an hour long activity in which a Dog Mentor assists and observes one to two new/returning volunteers shortly after they complete their Shadow Shift. The Mentor takes the new/returning volunteers through typical dog walking procedures including entering the kennels, harnessing the dogs, where to walk, what type of behaviors to look for, etc.

There are two methods for scheduling a Mentor Walk. The quickest and easiest way is to ask for a Mentor Walk on the BHS Volunteers Facebook group. (You must request to join the group after you successfully

complete your Shadow Shift.) Simply write a post asking for a Mentor Walk and a Mentor will respond. It helps if you can put your availability. The other method is to simply wait until you see a Mentor volunteering at the same time as you.

Once a new volunteer successfully completes their Shadow Shift, they are permitted to volunteer at a beginner's pace until they can arrange and complete their Mentor Walk. ***A "beginners pace" constitutes socializing and walking smaller, easier dogs while remaining on BHS property.*** A new volunteer should partake in a Mentor Walk within the first 10 hours of volunteering. Should that much time pass without completing the Mentor Walk, please contact the Volunteer Programs Manager before continuing.

The Mentor guiding the walk will decide if the volunteer is ready to volunteer independently or if another Mentor Walk or two is necessary. The volunteer may also decide to partake in another Mentor Walk or two before they can be comfortable with the entirety of the volunteer role. In most cases, one Mentor Walk is sufficient. Upon successful completion of the Mentor Walk, the Mentor will supply the volunteer with the Dog sticker for their name tag. This is the final step for Level 1A Volunteer training.

Adoption Ambassadors

Adoption Ambassadors are experienced and trusted volunteers who have been trained to process an adoption. They are usually utilized during mobile adoption events and are often given the authority to be the lead person for such events. A great deal of trust is associated with this status as the future of the animals we serve depends on their judgment. But we know that our volunteers love and know the animals they represent just as much as

staff does, and they have the best intentions for the animals at heart.

Adoption Ambassadors must have passed at least the Level 2 training before they can receive Ambassador training with dogs. If, after you've qualified for training, you're interested in achieving this status, please let staff know ASAP as it might take time to be able to schedule training. In the meantime, you are encouraged to observe staff during adoptions.

You will likely start out assisting with phone calls, sorting files, and creating adoption files. Once you are comfortable with the basics, you will be trained to do more complex tasks.

Interpreting Dog Behavior

As a dog handling volunteer, it is important that you are always aware of how a dog is acting. The environment here is inherently stressful and dogs may exhibit behaviors that can lead to potentially dangerous situations. There are many behavioral signs given by dogs that may indicate fear and/or aggression. Some indicators are more severe and obvious than others and a definitive interpretation is not always available.

Below are a few signs that indicate a dog might be frightened or aggressive. **DO NOT APPROACH A DOG IF IT IS SHOWING THESE SIGNS.**

Signs of a Frightened Dog	Signs of an Aggressive Dog
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Lowered ears flat against head· Avoidance behavior· Shivering or trembling· Abnormal salivation· Excessive panting· Enhanced submission· Uncontrolled urination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Strong eye contact· Erect ears· Snarling/growling· Snipping/nipping· Hackles up· Tall stance with elevated hair

Stop Bites Before They Happen!

Bites aren't common at BHS, but that is because our volunteers diligently take heed of the following information:

The shelter atmosphere can be extremely stressful for animals, and even though they are evaluated, certain situations or environmental triggers may cause an animal to act out or become aggressive towards people or other animals. Animals can show signs of aggression or fear for various reasons and sometimes without obvious warning. Unfamiliarity with the environment, illness, medical treatments, confined housing situations, isolation, and boredom can all contribute to stress, potential fear, and aggression of the shelter

animal. Stay alert and exercise extreme caution when handling animals that exhibit signs of fear and/or aggression. If you are unsure of how to handle an animal that you feel might become aggressive, contact a staff member immediately. This is something the staff needs to be made aware of right away.

Fear Displays

You are more likely to be bitten by a fearful dog than a confident, “aggressive” dog. Fear displays mean a dog feels unsafe, unhappy, and more than a little freaked out. Fear displays mean the dog’s first instinct is flight. A cornered, fearful dog (think: small kennel) who cannot flee is likely to switch over to fight mode. Give the dog space. Pay attention to triggers that might make dogs nervous (e.g., men, hats, beards...). Common signs to look out for are:



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Closed mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Low tail <input type="checkbox"/> Hackles up <input type="checkbox"/> Raised paw <input type="checkbox"/> Whale eyes (wide eyes with whites showing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ears back <input type="checkbox"/> Low tail <input type="checkbox"/> Lowering posture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hackles up <input type="checkbox"/> Lip licking <input type="checkbox"/> Low posture <input type="checkbox"/> Rounded Spine <input type="checkbox"/> Ears back
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Threat Displays

Dogs do NOT want to bite—it’s a last resort measure when they feel something they value is in danger. These valuables may be:

- Personal space
- Food/objects
- Physical safety
- Territory

Dogs will always offer threat displays (AKA warnings) before they make their move. Some dogs will give a lot of warnings while others seem to show none.

Here's what to look for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Hard eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Whale eye <input type="checkbox"/> Head on positioning <input type="checkbox"/> Closed or open mouth	<input type="checkbox"/> Head on positioning <input type="checkbox"/> Weight forward <input type="checkbox"/> Square posture <input type="checkbox"/> Lip puckering
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Stressed Dog Do's and Don'ts

What we SHOULD do around a stressed dog	What we SHOULD NOT do around a stressed dog
<input type="checkbox"/> Stay relaxed and calm <input type="checkbox"/> Give the dog space <input type="checkbox"/> Keep your eyes soft and remember to blink (don't stare) <input type="checkbox"/> Turn your head frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Approach at an angle or curve <input type="checkbox"/> Crouch down but face away <input type="checkbox"/> Stay silent or keep your voice down (use a low tone), but do not whisper <input type="checkbox"/> Let them greet you when they are ready. · If the dog is safe to touch, pet the side of their face or neck	<input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT tense your body <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT hold your breathe <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT hug the dog <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT lean over the dog <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT pat the dog on its head <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT speak loudly (you're barking) <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT crouch directly in front of the dog <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT approach in a straight line <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT stare in their eyes or face <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT move unusually slowly or quickly

How to Safely Break Up a Dog Fight

Successfully breaking up a dog fight requires TWO people. Never attempt to break up a dogfight by yourself. With proper and attentive dog handling, dogfights won't occur. If a dogfight were to happen, **do NOT put your hands anywhere near the dogs' heads**. In attempts to redirect the dog's attention, throw a metal bowl on the ground, clap your hands, or yell loudly. Sometimes this is distracting enough to redirect the dogs' attention. If a bowl is not available, you can use a bucket of water or hose to pour water in the dogs' faces. At this point, the dogs' attention should be redirected and simultaneously both people should grab each dog's rear hips or leashes and pull them apart. If you are uncomfortable with breaking up the fight, calmly leave and find help. Once the fight has ended, please return the dogs to their kennels and alert a staff member immediately.

Quarantine

If a dog at the shelter does bite and/or scratch a volunteer, staff, or visitor AND draws any blood, then they will be placed in quarantine. Quarantine lasts for 10 days whether the bite and/or scratch was an accident or not. During this time the dog will be tested for any potential diseases and be isolated from people and other animals. Butte Humane Society does not like to put animals in quarantine, away from public eyes, and would prefer not to have to assign dogs a bite history. Please exercise caution when handling the dogs so we can avoid all quarantines.

Exercising good judgment and remembering that any animal can react differently with the right environmental trigger will help you remain safe while handling animals during your volunteer service.

Dog Walking



Purpose

Every dog loves to get out and play! Dog walking gives you the opportunity to play with a dog one-on-one while they receive a much-deserved break from the kennel. This allows the dog to have time to wander the play yard, go for a long walk, and just be a dog. Walk/play time helps keep them healthy and happy until they find a loving home.

Removing and Returning Dogs

You should only move dogs in and out of the kennels from the indoor part of the kennel. Do not go in through the outdoor kennels. Before removing a dog from the kennel, be sure to read the walk list thoroughly so that you are fully prepared to handle the dog.

When you take out a dog, it is very important to make sure you have full control of the dog and make sure the area is safe and clear before you exit the kennel. Walk directly to the building wall to put distance between the dog and the other dogs in the kennels. Exit the building through the closest door. When returning the dog, make sure to enter through the same door and go directly to the appropriate kennel.

Easy-Walk Harnesses

How to harness a dog will be covered in your Shadow Shift and Mentor Walk. Always attach the leash to the Easy Walk Harness AND the dog's collar. Ensure the odd colored strap is at the belly and always unfasten that strap to place the harness on the dog. Attach the harness to the dog inside the kennel. The harnesses have the sizes on their tags; make sure it is the best fit for the dog you are walking. If you are unsure of how to use it, please ask a staff member or other volunteer.


Harness fitting step by step

Important: Please be sure to read and understand all instructions before using the harness on your dog. Throughout the fitting process and during initial use of Easy Walk Harness, motivate and encourage your dog with praise and special tasty treats. If your dog is especially active, have someone help you by feeding treats while you fit and adjust. It might be easiest to remove the harness to make fitting adjustments.

Please fit your dog in a quiet indoor space to ensure a stress free and safe environment. Start with all straps fully extended. To achieve a proper fit, your dog should be standing. Dogs may "tense up" during fitting, so check the fit again after the dog has walked in the harness for a few minutes. Readjust as needed. Visit www.PetSafe.net/Easy-Walk-Harness for an instructional video.



1 Fit the Shoulder Strap



A

Unsnap the belly strap quick-snap. Place the shoulder strap over the dog's head with the chest strap resting on the dog's chest. You can encourage your dog to put his head through the harness by offering a treat (Fig. A).



B

Adjust the shoulder strap so the "O" rings sit above and behind the dog's shoulder (Fig. B).

2 Fit the Belly Strap



C

Adjust the length of the belly strap so that the harness is snug around the dog's girth when you connect the quick-snap (Fig. C).



D

(Fig. D) Once the shoulder and belly straps are connected and adjusted, they should:

- Resemble a vertical line as much as possible and should not be in the sensitive armpit area.
- Have a snug fit so that you can only fit 1-2 fingers between the strap and the dog's body. A snug fit is important because the shoulder and belly straps combined create the foundation that keeps the harness in place and keeps it from rotating on the dog. Rotation around the dog can cause uncomfortable rubbing and chafing.

3 Fit the Chest Strap



E

The chest strap should fit horizontally and not droop down or too easily ride up close to the dog's neck (Fig. E). It will be much easier to make this adjustment if you remove the harness from your dog. The chest strap has two adjustment points. You will want to adjust the sides evenly so the martingale remains in the center. For example if you estimated you needed to adjust the chest strap by one inch, you will adjust each side on the strap by a half an inch (Fig. F).



F



G

When you're ready to take a walk, you will attach the leash to the D-ring on the chest strap. Please refer to the Training and Usage Tips for proper leash techniques to use with this harness (Fig. G).

Dogs Walking You

When walking a dog, be sure to keep the dog next to you at all times and avoid "Sled Dogging" (when a dog pulls you down the path). Keep the dog on a short leash and harness and reward them for being near you with

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treats and praise. Never at any time should you allow the dog to pull you out the door or gate. Teaching dogs appropriate leash etiquette by rewarding them for good leash behavior is one of the best ways to increase their adoptability.

Always pick up poop!

Pick it up with a bag, tie the bag, and ensure the bag makes it into an outside garbage bin. Never lay it down with the intention of coming back to get it. Too often it's forgotten and residents are quick to complain. If you see any other poop or filled poop bags not from the dog you are walking, pick that up too. Always bring more than one poop bag with you.

Dog Play Yards

The play yards are the large fenced areas behind the main building. Volunteers are welcome to take their dog to the play yard where they play off leash. Make sure they are empty before letting a dog loose in the large yard.

Only one dog is allowed in a play yard at a time unless you are trained on Play Groups. If the dogs are kennel mates and another volunteer with the other kennel mate arrives at the play yard, they are allowed to join. Other than that, you must pass Play Group training before allowing dogs to interact.

Play Yard Etiquette

While working with the dogs in our play yard, be sure to only work with one dog at a time. Always close and latch the gate when you enter the yard. No two dogs should be off leash in the same yard at the same time unless you are trained and cleared by staff to do so.

Last but not least, please, please, please CLEAN UP after the dog. This keeps the yard clean for you, your dog, other volunteers, and any dog that may use the play yards after you. This means keeping your eyes on the dog at all times. Keep the water bowls filled and clean.

NOTE: BHS staff has priority over the main play yard. If you see a staff member with a dog headed to the play yard, please relinquish the play yard to them. Staff use the main play yard for meets with potential adopters.

Do NOT let dogs fence fight...ever! If a dog starts to run the fence with another dog, redirect the dog by calling its name, bouncing a ball, or putting them on a leash. This behavior may appear "fun" for the dogs but it can turn into a challenging behavior and escalate into a fence fight very quickly. If the dog starts barking hard, showing teeth, or chasing another dog down the fence line, remove the dog from the play yard and return them to their kennel. Be sure to notify any fence fighting behaviors to staff.

Pay attention to signage on the kennels. **Any dog with a cone on may NOT be off leash at any time. This means they cannot be in the play yard.** But you can take them on gentle walks around the property.



Play Groups & Tandem Walks

Play Groups and Tandem Walks are when two or more volunteers each take a dog to the play yard to romp around carefree or when walking on leash in close proximity.

Volunteers must go through training to participate as there are many unforeseen issues that you would need to be prepared for. Volunteers must have around 35 hours experience with dog walking at BHS before attending training. Until you've been trained, do not allow dogs to come into contact with each other. Ask a staff member if you are interested.

The Walk List

The Walk List is an extremely important element in walking dogs. The walk list tells you about each dog's walking limitations and expectations. Each dog is an individual and they each have specific walk instructions that are updated daily; so it is very important that you read the walk list every single time you take a dog out.

For every walk, in the corresponding box next to the dog's name write the time you're taking the dog, and when you return write what time you came in, what you did, and your initials.

- PB – Potty break
- W – Walk
- PY – Play yard
- S – Socialize (Sitting inside the kennel with the dog)

Cells:

Make sure to read each cell prior to taking a dog out. Each sheet is broken down by level. For example, all Level 1A dogs will be on the same sheet. Here is a breakdown of each cell

- Date: Will indicate what that day's date is
- Dog's Name
- Dog Level: Example, 1A or 1B
- Location: Which kennel that dog is in
- Harness Size: What size to use for a dog. Typically we will have a box labeled with that dog's name on it that has already been fitted, but if that is missing, this is a very helpful tool. Please make sure if any new harness being used on a dog if it has not yet been fitted, or ask a staff member for assistance. Keep on leash and out of water until: This indicates a dog has recently had a medical procedure such as a

spay or neuter. Excessive play could tear surgery sutures. Surgery sutures dissolve in water, be very careful of moisture

- Walk Time In: What time you brought dog back
- Walk Time Out: What time you took the dog out to walk.
 - Please note, the walk time in and out is very important. This is how staff and other volunteers know what dogs need to go out next, and to ensure no dog is being left out overplayed.
- Type: This lets staff and other volunteers know what that dog's activity has been for the day. This is very important!
- Volunteer Initials: This lets us know who we need to communicate with if necessary.

DATE	Dog LEVEL	Location	Harness Size	Keep on leash and out of water until	Walk time in	Walk time out	Type: PB W P Y S	VOLUNTEER Initials
Dogs Name	Young Puppy can be nippy. Loves to play with people, still learning how to walk on the leash.	B6	S	4/17/21				
Dogs Name								
Dogs Name								

READ EVERY TIME!!!

Dog walkers provide much needed exercise and socialization for dogs at the shelter. Walking shifts are available M-F from 10:00am – 5pm and 11:00am-4pm on weekends

Here is a step-by-step list of the typical routine for walking dogs:

This is subject to vary.

1. **Proper attire:** Always wear your volunteer shirt, jeans, and closed-toed shoes.
2. **Sign in:** Use your Bloomerang Volunteer login to sign in for shifts. You can either use a computer at the front desk, in the volunteer lounge, or you may use the app on your smartphone.
3. **Name tag:** Find your name tag from the name tag box, put it in a name tag sleeve, and affix it to your chest where visible.
4. **Grab a key:** Take a key and fill out the sign-in sheet. Keys can be found in the volunteer lounge.
5. **Walk List:** This is found in each of the alcoves in the dog kennel hallways.
 - a. Find your appropriate level walk list clipboard.
 - b. READ THE NOTES ON THE WALK LIST.
 - c. Take out priority dogs first. These dogs are usually house trained and have been “holding it” for many hours. The names of priority dogs will be highlighted.
 - d. Take out dogs that have not been walked yet.
 - i. If all dogs you qualify to walk have gone out, look to see who has been waiting longest for this round of walks. To streamline this process, it’s best to go in alphabetical order.
 - e. Pick a dog you feel comfortable walking.
 - f. Find that dog’s tub in the cabinet and grab its pre-fitted harness and a leash.
6. **Gear Up:** Make sure to grab treats and poop bags.
7. **Get dog from kennel**
 - a. Find the kennel.
 - b. Unlock the door, but leave the door closed.

- c. Make sure the dog is calm before entering. Give it treats for sitting nicely.
- d. Always open the door inward! This protects you from the dog jumping and pushing the door onto you. It also makes it harder for the dog to escape.
- e. Squeeze in. Dogs WILL try to get out. Leave as little room as possible by filling empty space with your body.
- f. Secure the door behind you.
- g. Keep the dog calm with treats and let it get comfortable with you.
 - i. If the dog is too jumpy to harness, strap the leash to the collar, drop the leash, and step on it. Make sure you're not pinning the dog down too low.
 - ii. Remember, if you don't feel comfortable, you don't have to walk that dog.
- h. Harness the dog (see Easy Walk Harness below).
 - i. Affix the leash to both the harness and the collar.
- i. Get a good grip of the leash down low with your hand through the loop.
- j. When the coast is clear, open the kennel door inward.
- k. As quickly as possible, close the door behind you, and walk to the nearest door and keep the dog away from the other kennels.
- l. Peek outside the door to make sure there are no other dogs heading your way.
- m. Once clear, head out.
 - i. Remember the door through which you exited, because that is the same door you will return through.

8. Walk the dog

- a. 20-30 minutes is generally the ideal amount of time to walk each dog.
- b. Dogs that are permitted to be "off leash" can run around in the play yards. Drop the leash and be sure you have treats and/or toys to be able to call the dog back when finished. Spend no more than 15 minutes in the yard when other volunteers may want to use the play yard too.
- c. Always keep distance from other dogs.
- d. Walk in opposite directions from others.

9. Return Dog to Kennel

- a. Return the dog through the door from which you exited.
- b. Have your key ready.
- c. Make sure the path is clear.
- d. Unlock the door and open inward. Enter and secure the door
- e. Remove the harness, leave the collar.
- f. Exit, pulling kennel gate inward, and lock kennel then replace leash and harness in dog's bin.
- g. Make any comments in the comment binder you feel are worth noting.
- h. Mark your walk times on the Walk List and feel free to start over again with another dog.

Important Reminders:

- Though we want all dogs to be walked, it's more important to only walk dogs you are comfortable with.
- Be sure to take out a dog that has not been out already.
- Dogs that have been on a walk will have a volunteer's initials by their name on the walk list.
- If all dogs have been out, please walk them again OR walk and work with the dogs that you are most comfortable with. If you feel comfortable, the dog will as well.
- ALWAYS KEEP YOUR HAND THROUGH THE LEASH LOOP.
- Make notes of behaviors in the comment binder.
- The greater the radius of space your dog has to move, the less control you have.
- Avoid proximity between your dog and all other dogs.
 - While dogs are out for a walk they should never come close enough to another dog to be nose-to-nose. This means not stopping to talk to another person that has a dog, unless the other dog is your dog's kennel mate. Even if the dogs seem to be friendly to one another, the inherent stress of the shelter coupled with other environmental factors could lead to tension and unnecessary risk. Even a friendly dog won't necessarily like every other dog they meet.

This is a safety precaution. In addition, you never know if one of the dogs is sick and could spread illness. **Volunteers who are approved and given permission for tandem walks or play groups should follow proper protocol when introducing dogs to one another.**
- Remember that if a dog bites you and draws blood, accident or not, the dog must be

quarantined. *This is the law.* If you are uncomfortable with how rough or hard a dog takes treats let our behavioral staff know. That's something we would need to work on with the dog.

- Do not lean over a dog. This dog may interpret this as dominant or threatening behavior.
- Do not play or interact with a dog while it is eating or drinking. Never try to take food, treats, or toys from a dog's mouth. If you want to get a toy or leash out of the dog's mouth, give it something else to put in its mouth, such as a treat. It will have to drop whatever it is to eat the treat.
- Make note of any medical issues on the clipboard next to the volunteer cabinet.

Training

NOTE: NEVER YELL AT A DOG, SCOLD A DOG, HIT, KICK, OR THREATEN TO DO ANY OF THESE THINGS WHEN HANDLING A BUTTE HUMANE SOCIETY (or any) DOG. If you do, we will immediately ask you to turn in your volunteer shirt and leave.



Dogs that are trained to sit, lie down, shake and fetch have an increased chance of being adopted. Working on these behaviors with dogs while they are outside of the kennel is beneficial.

Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement is highly encouraged! It has been proven that rewarding a dog for good behavior is much more effective than fear tactics. It makes more sense to reward good behavior rather than punishing bad behavior, because when you're chastising a dog for undesired behavior, you're only telling the dog what NOT to do without telling it what TO do. It is confusing for the dog. Fear tactics lead to lack of trust and can result in fearful behavior and can negatively

affect a dog in the long-run. Training a dog using positive reinforcement is proven to have long-lasting benefits and is sure to make a happy dog!

Fear and pain based training will not be tolerated. This means no leash pops, rib jabs, scolding, hitting, or anything that causes discomfort in any way as a means of "correction." If you see another person directing this type of behavior toward any BHS dog, notify staff immediately.

How to Discourage from Pulling on the Leash

If the dog is pulling on the leash you have three options:

1. Stop, make the dog sit and then begin again. Take just a few steps at a time to prevent discouraging the dog. If the dog does not know how to sit, eye contact works too as long as they are keeping their paws on the ground and remaining calm.
2. Turn around quickly and change directions each time the dog starts to pull. This may make you dizzy but the quick and sudden movement will help keep the dog focused on you instead of making a dash to the play yard.
3. Stop and become a tree. Do not move. When the dog looks back at you, immediately praise them for the attention and encourage the dog to come back to you. When the dog is back at your side you may

continue walking.

How to Discourage a Dog from Biting the Leash

Never allow the dog to take the leash in their mouth. If the dog puts their mouth on the leash, give the dog something else to carry, a ball, toy, or even a small towel. Check the volunteer cabinet or ask a staff member for bitter spray (which makes the leash taste bad to them).

Common Issues When Handling Dogs

While it is impossible to train you to handle every possible issue in shelter dogs (every dog is different!), we hope that these training materials will at least give you general knowledge and tools to work easily and efficiently with our “typical” shelter dogs. Here are tips for handling a few of the most common behavioral issues faced by staff and volunteers when working with shelter dogs:

- 1. Off-Leash vs. Drop-Leash:** Don't take the leash off a dog in the play yard until you are more familiar with it. Dropping the leash (leaving it attached) is a good idea when getting to know a dog, because if you have a difficult time getting it to come back to you it would be easier to grab the leash. Also, if the dog is jumping uncontrollably on you, you can step on the leash to keep it from accidentally hurting you.
- 2. Jumping:** Turn your body away from the dog, avoid eye contact, and do not speak to the dog.
- 3. Biting at your clothes:** Stop your movement, put the dog on the leash, and begin walking only when the biting has ceased. Give the dog something to carry in his mouth so he is unable to bite at clothing.
- 4. Reluctant to be re-leashed/kenneled:** Throw a ball and when the dog brings it back put the leash on. Do NOT take him in yet. Continue to play with them so the leash becomes a pleasant thing. If your dog is not interested in toys, then ask them to sit, put the leash on, and give them plenty of treats. Do this a few times. Do NOT grab at a dog's collar. Remember do not stop when kenneling a dog. Continue momentum of the walk until you are all the way in the kennel. Walking slowly or stopping will allow the dog to re-focus his attention away from the walk and could cause unnecessary problems.
- 5. Only ask once!** No repeating. Do not give dogs options on when to listen. By asking more than once you are allowing the dog to choose when they would like to obey. Not only that, dogs do not speak English, therefore “sit” and “sit-sit” are two different words. The goal is to make it as simple as possible for the dogs to understand what we are asking of them as well as to keep them from learning to ignore commands, which can make training even more difficult.
- 6. Never grab a dog's collar to redirect attention.** Your hands need to stay positive and grabbing a dog's collar forcefully may cause them to associate your hands with a negative or undesired action. This may be a trigger for the dog to react and bite. Your hands should only be used for petting, direction, rewarding with treats, and positive interactions.

Enrichment



Shelter life is extremely stressful and any opportunity for the dogs to get outside is an enriching experience. Throwing a ball for a dog and making it sit each time to receive another throw not only exercises the body but also enriches the mind and teaches the dog appropriate play behavior. If you do not feel comfortable with throwing a ball or working on behaviors, simple things like sitting in a chair with a dog while brushing the dog's coat and rubbing ears helps give the dog social skills that are crucial for a successful adoption. Just sitting in a chair and ignoring the dog while it sniffs around does nothing to help the dog's adoptability. **Please remain off your phone while in the socialization yard unless you are taking pictures of the dog playing.** If you are using your phone for anything other than taking pictures or videos, you are unable to pay attention to the dog. Always reward a dog for coming back and interacting with you with treats or love.

While enriching a dog, it is important to remember basic handling guidelines to ensure that you and the dog are playing appropriately and safely.

- Never bend over a dog.** This is a mixed signal and can sometimes make dogs really uncomfortable. Either stands tall with your shoulders back, or even better, kneel down to the side of the dog. This makes you seem much less intimidating to many dogs.
- The "two-ball" rule.** When using tennis balls to enrich dogs, be sure that you are following the two-ball rule. By having two balls, you are eliminating the potential for an unintentional bite by not attempting to grab the ball out of the dog's mouth. Many times in the excitement of play, dogs do not understand where the ball ends and the fingers begin. Also, by asking the dog to drop one ball before getting the other ball teaches them appropriate play behaviors.



Toys

Enrichment refers to mental stimulation. An easy way to achieve this for our dogs is by playing with toys such as tennis balls and Kongs. All Kongs should be stuffed with wet dog food or dry treats only.

Cross contamination is a serious issue in a shelter environment. Used toys must be washed before they can be used again. The exceptions are all the balls, Frisbees, etc. that dogs play with in the play yard. Only healthy, fully vaccinated dogs are permitted in the play yard, so sharing toys there is not a concern. Even those toys need to be cycled out and cleaned regularly.

Ask a staff member about leaving a toy in a dog's kennel for an extended amount of time. **Some dogs cannot have toys because they tear them up and ingest them.** This could be extremely harmful to the dog. Rope toys should never be in a kennel unless a volunteer is in the kennel playing with the dog.

Off-Leash Activities

Playing with dogs off-leash is one of the most enjoyable activities here at the shelter. Dogs get to run around and just be dogs! Please remember that dogs should only be off leash in the play yard and in their kennel! Being off leash anywhere else on the shelter grounds is dangerous!

- Free time in the yard.** This is the off leash version of walks for fun. The dogs get the chance to wander the play yard, catch up on the local news (i.e. sniff where everyone else has peed), run, dig or explore to their heart's content. This kind of mellow downtime is important to a dog's mental health in a high stress environment. Be sure to give treats or loving pets whenever the dog comes back to "check in" with you! This is a behavior we want to reinforce!
- Work-to-play.** Rover loves to fetch. Great! Now make him work for it. Ask Rover to sit before you throw the ball for him. If Rover does not know how to sit, wait until he gives you eye contact, then throw the ball.

Kennel Socialization

Kennel Socialization is a great activity for volunteers that are not up for the rigors of walking dogs and for puppies and under-vaccinated dogs that can't leave their kennels yet.

Purpose

Kennel Socialization is spending time providing enrichment and relaxation, which is the key to a happy shelter dog. You can take part in ensuring the dogs are comfortable, entertained, and on their best behavior when adopters visit by encouraging nice manners. By performing some basic training with them, our dogs will learn that good stuff is more likely to occur when they are quiet and calm in their kennels.

As a socialization volunteer, downtime is equally important to the animals. All you have to do is go into the kennel and hang out with the dogs. Calm and quiet petting can go a long way. Mellow, in-kennel interaction will improve kennel manners and quality of life resulting in calmer, happier dogs. Reading to the dogs is a great, calm way for dogs to be accustomed to human interaction.

What to Do

- Make sure to sign in on the volunteer computer and grab a key.
- Check the Walk list for important information.
- Get any supplies needed, such as tools to use for grooming, toys, and treats. They are located in the volunteer cabinet.
- Spend time with the dogs in their kennel.
- Offer a calm and mellow kennel environment.
- Pet the dogs and scratch their bellies.
- Brush the dogs.
- Play a mild game of tug-of-war.

- Spend 10-20 minutes of quality time with the dog, if possible (more is also encouraged!) Return walk list volunteer cabinet and place your initials, the start time, and end time of your socialization period.

Puppies

A puppy's prime socialization period is between about three weeks and three months. The quantity and quality of their interactions is what shapes their future personality. The next few months are when dogs learn and develop behaviors. It is important not to encourage biting and jumping but to encourage desirable behaviors like sitting and practicing patience. Ask a staff member permission before entering an under vaccinated puppy's kennel. You will need to **properly put on gloves and booties**. Bring clean toys to discourage mouthing.

Kennel Presentation

Kennel presentation refers to the overall impression of a dog while in its kennel. Please note that while in a shelter environment, kennel presentation is valid for about 30 seconds. After that, the environment around the dog will cause distractions, and that's ok and normal.



Treating for Calm

Imagine you are an adopter wandering through our dog kennels; some of the dogs are sitting quietly and looking at you soulfully, others are jumping, barking, lunging, and will not respond when you ask them to sit. Who are you going to be more interested in taking home? It is typically the most fearful dogs that tend to appear aggressive in the kennel. Fearful dogs experience the flight-or-fight instinct. Remember, when they are in that tiny kennel, flight is not an option, so fight is the last resort. They aren't actually going to "fight", but they want you to think that they will by exhibiting aggressive behavior to get you to leave. Of course, these are usually the dogs that do better in a warm, loving home environment. In other cases, the dog simply has a lot of pent up energy and really wants to get out of the kennel with you. Treating for Calm is a

gentle, fun, and effective way to teach all our dogs that good stuff is more likely to happen if they are quiet and calm in their kennels. It is easy to do, but first you have to know a little something about training

A How-To Guide

Here are the basics:

- Have your treats ready and in hand!

- Approach the kennel and keep an eye on the dog's behavior as you come up to the kennel door.
- If the dog is NOT barking or jumping: treat!
- Now wait and see if he sits without you saying anything.
 - If he does: treat!
 - If he does not: ask him to sit; treat if he does!
- If he does not respond to "sit," do not say "sit" again. Move on to the next dog because the current dog probably does not know the command and saying it again will not do any good. If the dog is barking or jumping, then it's time for Plan B...

Plan B

Correcting Bad Habits—instead of yelling at the dog, remove something the dog wants. We take something away to reduce the likelihood that the undesirable behavior will occur in the future. In this case we are taking away attention until the jumping/barking stops.

- Turn away from him. Start by just looking in the other direction.
- If the dog stops jumping/barking, turn back and deliver the treat.
- If the barking and jumping continues, completely turn your back on him. Again, if he settles down, turn and give a treat.
- If it still continues, move on to the next dog and try the current dog again later.

Offsite Volunteer Opportunities

It is wonderful when a dog can get away from the shelter for a day or two. Approved volunteers can take approved dogs off BHS property. To participate in the following programs, you will need to have about 30 hours of volunteer time with dogs. Again, this is subjective and ultimately up to the Dog Adoptions staff to decide if they are comfortable with you taking a dog out and about. Get to know the staff. Keep in mind that the dog you really want to take out and the dogs that need it more may not be the same. While it's a good thing any time any dog gets out, it's the long term and poorly socialized dogs that need it more.

Dog on the Go (D.O.G.)

This is a great program that gets the dog out for a day. Take the dog to the park for a long hike, take it for a long drive, or simply take it home for some much-needed peace and quiet and a comfy couch. Every day, staff will assign four dogs that are available to take out for the day. They rotate so that more dogs get the chance to get out.



Bedtime Foster

Bedtime foster is an extension of D.O.G. in which you take the dog home overnight. There's nothing like doggie snuggles. Ask a staff member for more details.

Special Events

Throughout the year BHS hosts various fundraising events, participates in outreach events, etc. We always need volunteers to make these events successful. The Volunteer Programs Manager will reach out close to the event date to see if any volunteers are interested and give them the opportunity to sign up.

Final Reminders

- Absolutely no friends, significant others, etc. can be with you while you are volunteering.** Even if you are holding the leash on a walk. If you would like to volunteer with friends or a significant other we welcome it, but every person has to be an **active BHS volunteer**.
- Every dog MUST have a harness with a leash attached to both the harness and collar before exiting that dog's individual kennel.**
- Always read the walk list.** Staff updates the information daily, and it's important to be as informed as possible about the dogs.
- If a dog has just had their spay/neuter surgery they cannot be off leash.** This means they can only go on short walks and never to the play yard.
- Dress Appropriately.** Anyone violating the dress code will be sent home to change. No exceptions. You must wear Jeans (**no leggings, shorts, sweatpants, pants with holes/rips...**), close toed shoes, and your volunteer shirt. Always wear your volunteer shirt while volunteering. If you have a sweatshirt on, wear the t-shirt over it.
 - *This dress code is for your safety and to prevent accidents. If a dog scratches you and blood is drawn that dog will have to go into quarantine for 10 days. During this time they will not be able to be adopted.*
- Only work with dogs that are at or below your level. You may not work with Level 2 dogs until you have completed the Level 2 training.
- Keep kennel manners in mind when you go to work with a dog. Try to get the dog to sit or at least stop jumping and barking before you open the kennel door.
- Always lock the kennel when you are done and have returned the dog.