

VOLUNTEER GUIDE

A handbook for volunteering with SGA





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Welcome

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your gift of time to Saving Great Animals (SGA)! Your contribution allows us to rescue, rehabilitate, and re-home many homeless dogs each month. We are so grateful for your commitment to our organization.

Saving Great Animals is one of Seattle's largest foster-based dog rescue organizations. It was founded in 2007 by Perrin Kaplan. SGA has rescued and placed close to 9000 dogs to date. Our efforts are only possible through support from volunteers like you.

We depend on our volunteers for every aspect of our organization: fostering rescued dogs, transporting dogs from shelters to foster families, taking dogs to the veterinarian for treatment, coordinating adoption events, and assisting with administrative work in our office to name a few! Each of these duties makes a huge difference in the lives of the dogs we rescue.

Thank you for taking the first step in helping us achieve our mission to rescue dogs in our community.

Enclosed is more information about our organization and our volunteer opportunities.

We look forward to making this a very rewarding experience for you. Please don't hesitate to ask questions, and tell us how we can make your volunteer experience at SGA the very best.

With Gratitude,

Saving Great Animals



About Saving Great Animals

Current Leadership team

Perrin Kaplan - President and Founder - perrin@savinggreatanimals.org

Jacintha Sayed - Director - jacintha@savinggreatanimals.org

Rachel Miller - Accounting Manager - rachel@savinggreatanimals.org

Lynn Davis - Case Manager - lynn@savinggreatanimals.org

Contact information

Mailing address: 16620 SE 24th Street, Bellevue WA 98008

Payments/invoices: rachel@savinggreatanimals.org

History

Saving Great Animals was founded in 2007 by Perrin Kaplan, who at the time worked at Nintendo USA. She recognized the need in the community to save homeless dogs and found she had a knack for making the right matches between people and dogs.

Now, in 2020 SGA is a successful non-profit organization that is highly regarded by professionals, veterinarians, shelters and the community. We rescue, rehabilitate and re-home dogs from overcrowded shelters, as well as dogs surrendered by their owners for various reasons. In addition we partner with a select number of international rescues to bring dogs in need to the US. Once we receive a dog, we provide medical care, behavioral rehabilitation and a more stable environment for the dogs to become ready for adoption. We pride ourselves on being a rescue group that is flexible and not breed specific. We also have the ability to rescue senior dogs as well as those with health or medical issues.



We accomplish a true miracle within our community every year as we successfully rescue hundreds of dogs from euthanasia, placing them in loving, safe, forever homes.

This is only possible thanks to a team of very hardworking and dedicated volunteers who bring a wealth of experience which includes; dog behavior, business sense, use of technology, marketing and networking while maintaining our philosophy of keeping the welfare of the dogs our first priority.

Another one of our strongest keys to success is our network of volunteers and foster family homes. Because we do not operate out of a shelter nor have a facility in which to house our adoptable dogs, we rely heavily on volunteers who lovingly open their hearts and their homes, offering temporary accommodations. Once integrated into one of our foster families, a dog that may have come to us frightened, timid, or otherwise emotionally scarred, will blossom and flourish with the tender loving care it receives there, often within just a few days or weeks.



How It All Works - From Rescue to Forever Home

1) Incoming dogs

Finds dogs	➔	We partner with a select number of shelters/ rescues in CA, TX and WA as well as a few international rescues.
Picks up dogs	➔	SGA arranges for transport from the shelter to an approved veterinary partner close to the shelter.
Transports dogs	➔	SGA arranges for transport for the dog from point of origin to Seattle.
Secures Fosters	➔	SGA reaches out to foster base to select the most suitable and available fosters for incoming dogs.
Arranges medical care	➔	Most dogs receive basic medical care and travel documents at their point of origin and see a vet again once they arrive with SGA.
Facilitates adoptions	➔	The dog remains with the Foster while applications are carefully screened and the dog is eventually adopted.

2) Fostering

Foster Application	➔	A foster fills out the Foster Application which is screened and approved by SGA
Foster Placement	➔	Key volunteers coordinate placing a dog with foster
Foster Care	➔	Foster takes care of the dog's daily needs. Communicates with SGA regularly.
Medical Care/ Behavioral needs	➔	SGA determines medical/behavioral needs and coordinates with foster for plan of action.
Facilitate Adoption	➔	SGA and the Foster work together to facilitate an adoption



3) Adoption

Adoption
Application



People go to website or event and see a dog(s) they are interested in. They then submit an adoption application online. SGA screens and approves applicant, then contacts the Foster and connects them with the applicant.

Meet and
Greet



Meet & Greet with all family members, including other family pets (dogs, cats, birds etc.) to see how the initial introduction goes and to make the adjustment into a new family easier for the dog and the potential adopting family. Meet and greets takes place at the foster's convenience and location.

Trial Adoption



After successful Meet & Greet, applicant has the option to start a two-week trial adoption. The trial period begins when the dog is taken home. This period is to ensure the dog and the adopting family are the right match

Finalize
Adoption



At the end of the two-week transition period, the adoption is finalized. The applicant signs an adoption contract and pays their adoption fee.



Ways to Volunteer

Saving Great Animals is committed to utilizing your valuable skill set to help rescue, rehabilitate and re-home as many dogs as possible. We depend on volunteers like you. Below are the most needed opportunities. The skills below are preferred, but not required. If you're interested in fostering a dog, please email jacintha@savinggreatanimals.org.

For for all other volunteer opportunities, contact volunteer@savinggreatanimals.org

Transporter - picking dogs up to go to medical appointments, adoption events. In some cases transport are needed for emergency situations where a dog is in danger.

Dog Groomer - provide bathing, brushing, nail trimming, and ear cleaning of rescued dogs.

Home Visits - help with making home visits to the adopter's home and ensuring a good placement for foster dog.

Adoption Event Lead - Organizes the planning and execution of adoption events, and other annual events. Tasks may include coordinating event logistics, marketing the event, setting up, breaking down, and ensuring appropriate recognition.

Adoption Event Co-Lead - Assists with setting up, breaking down, and helping people find the right dog for their family.

Arrivals volunteer - assists with incoming transports from out of state/country, assuring that all dogs that are arriving are safely transferred into the arms of their fosters.

Dog walker - in some cases where dogs are boarded, the dogs will need additional walks and/or mental stimulation



Fundraising event lead - Organizes the planning and execution of small fundraising events, usually in partnership with local businesses.

Special events volunteer - participates in key volunteer programs such as Century Link Concession stands, the Bark Benefit and other smaller fundraising events.

Our CenturyLink Team Lead is Jessi MacDonald and volunteers can contact her to sign up for SGA events at the stadium.

Other Ways to Get Involved

There are many ways supporters like you can get involved with Saving Great Animals beyond our volunteer opportunities.

Here are ten ways you can participate and help us save even more dogs.

- Donate supplies - A contribution of leashes, collars, hygiene products, beds, blankets, flea treatments or toys makes a huge difference in the lives of our dogs.
- Donate funds - Every dollar is stretched to rescue more dogs, provide them with greater medical care, and find them a loving home.
- Follow us on Facebook or other social media and "share" our dogs with your friends!
- Leave a positive review on our social media. Each online visitor increases the likelihood our dogs will find loving, forever homes.
- Sign up to be on a Transporter List, and let us know we can count on you when our dogs are in need of help getting to the veterinarian clinic, adoption events, and back to their foster families.
- Provide dog training assistance and empower our dogs with the obedience and knowledge they deserve.



- Become an SGA ambassador! Help us spread information about our mission and organization throughout our community.
- Do you know someone looking for a dog? Invite them to look at our website or attend one of our events.
- Set up your own fundraiser - these days Facebook enables you to set up small fundraisers for things like birthdays or special events.
- Support our fundraiser efforts by attending events, raising ticket sales or donating auction items.



Volunteer Process

In order to become a volunteer for SGA an individual must meet the following criteria:

- Be 21 years or older to foster a dog.
- Be 16 years or older to volunteer at an adoption event or fundraising event.
- Complete the SGA Volunteer Application and Waiver form.
- Provide appropriate information on your background, including but not limited to, previous volunteer experience, animal care experience.
- Have a valid WA state driver's license if you wish to transport dogs.
- Be without any conflict of interest with any activity or program of SGA, whether personal, philosophical or financial.
- Depending on your area of interest, you will be connected with the appropriate SGA team member to help you get started.
- Receive/Review the Volunteer Manual.
- Complete and sign all appropriate forms and agreements contained in the Volunteer Manual, including the Volunteer Agreement form on the last page.

We know you will be an excellent part of our team and look forward to saving dogs together!

Volunteer Guidelines

Volunteers must comply with all requirements set forth in the SGA Volunteer Manual and any other materials provided.

- Confidentiality: Volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information while serving as a volunteer for the organization.



- Handling Dogs: Volunteers should always handle SGA dogs with love and care.
- Be informed: All volunteers are encouraged to ask questions if unclear about duties or tasks or otherwise need more information.
- Be Presentable: All volunteers must dress appropriately for the conditions of their task. Moreover, they are responsible for providing a good image to the community members who interact with SGA.
- Shifts: Volunteers will be asked to serve during specific times. If a volunteer is unable to attend, the volunteer should notify SGA as soon as possible.
- Time Sheets: Volunteers seeking community service hours are responsible for keeping track of their hours and asking for the signatures from the event leads when using the Volunteer Log.
- Feedback: It is encouraged that volunteers provide SGA with feedback about their experience to ensure the continuous improvement of the program.
- Volunteers must follow safety rules and understand that working with animals comes with inherent risk.

Volunteer “no-no’s”

1. Volunteers may not accept dogs on behalf of SGA or make promises that SGA will assist in any way.
2. Volunteers may not use SGA shelter partnerships to pull dogs for other rescues or individuals.
3. Volunteers may not accept stray or lost animals on behalf of SGA and must always encourage the public to follow proper procedures if a stray is found.
4. Volunteers must always be aware of SGA’s public image and not engage in antagonistic discussions with the public, either in person or on social media.

Safety rules for dogs

Rescue dogs are in a state of uncertainty. Some are afraid, confused and may spook easily. If you are volunteering and working with dogs safety is our top priority.

All SGA dogs must have two leashes on at all times, as well as a proper ID tag.



If a dog gets away, notify SGA immediately. SGA will immediately mobilize volunteers to look for the dog and in some cases will work with a search & rescue dog to help pick up the scent of the lost dog.

No SGA dogs may interact with each other, or with non-SGA dogs, on leash or off leash unless you have express permission to do so.

If you are signed up to walk one of our dogs and the dog is in boarding, do not allow the dog to interact with other dogs unless previously discussed with the Director. Boarded dogs in particular may have dog-to-dog behavior issues.



Color Coding

All dogs are color coded based on their known behaviors, challenges and size. The color coding is as follows:

Green	Easy dog, no major behavioral issues. Can be walked or handled by any volunteer regardless of experience level.
Yellow	Dog may have minor behavior challenges such as pulling on a leash, jumping up. Dog may be larger in size and require a more mobile person.
Red	Dog may have significant behavioral challenges such as severe leash reactivity to people or other dogs, high escape risk, nipping or biting.

Similarly, all volunteers are also given a color code. Only 'red' volunteers can walk 'red' dogs.

Green	Little to no history in working with rescue dogs, not yet well versed in dog body language or behavior. Just started volunteering. May be less mobile or less able to walk larger, stronger dogs.
Yellow	Experienced with rescue dogs, good leash handling skills. Understands how to handle leash pulling or leash reactivity. Has good understanding of basic dog training commands.
Red	Expert dog handler. Can work with severely leash reactive dogs. Can handle large dogs with unpredictable behavior. Well versed in dog body language and behavior.



Volunteer Time Sheet

This form is to be used by Saving Great Animals volunteers that need to keep track of their volunteer hours. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to seek approval from an SGA representative if a signature is needed.

Volunteer Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Affiliated company or organization: _____

Date	Volunteer Location/ event	Total Hours	Notes

Total hours: _____

Volunteer Signature: _____

SGA Representative: _____