Lobby Specialist
Buddy Center
Volunteer Training Manual

Thank you for volunteering at the Buddy Center as a Lobby Specialist. This packet includes information to help familiarize you with the Buddy Center and Dumb Friends League policies and procedures.

Lobby Specialist volunteers will primarily work at the information desk, answer phones, and assist patrons in the kennels and lobby areas. Volunteers also assist adoption counselors with asking patrons pre-counseling questions, looking up patron numbers (P#s), and assisting with various other projects.

Attendance and Vacations
If you are unable to work your shift, please contact Volunteer Services at 720-241-7160 or volunteer@ddfl.org. This way we know that you will be out and we may be able to find another volunteer to fill your shift. If you would like to permanently change your position or the day or time of your shift, please contact the Volunteer Services Manager at volunteer@ddfl.org.

Duties at Start of Shift
1. Print out ‘Available Animals in Shelter’ handout for use at desk
2. Cross check holds for expiration times, remove or add a hold sign on the animals and update all holds.
3. Set-up counsel rooms, turn on computers.
4. Refill supplies at information desk.
   a. Dog treats
   b. Kleenex
   c. Pens
   d. Adoption packets
5. Make sure all animals have an adoption bio on their kennel.

Adoption Information Desk Process
When a patron comes to the League to adopt an animal, a general process is followed to ensure a fair and positive adoption experience. Adoption Information Specialists guide patrons through the beginning of the adoption process.

Steps of the Adoption Process
1. Browse shelter to pick out a pet – give patron a patron information card to fill out
2. Adoptions desk provides information on the pet. If time permits, counselors can provide basic and positive information.
3. Sign in  
4. Be assigned an adoption room and counselor  
5. Counsel  
6. Adoption

Adoption Information Specialists are involved in steps 1 through 4 of this process.

1. Choose a Pet  
Adopter Info cards and pens are located at the adoption desk for patrons to use as they browse the kennels. Ask them to write down the animal’s kennel number and A#. After selecting animals, patrons return to front desk with their selections.

2. Information Regarding Selected Animals

The Adoptions Desk Will Release:
- General information about the animal; e.g., age, weight, etc.
- General history of the animal; e.g., it came in as a transfer; it was brought in by a former owner, etc.
- Information from the animal’s profile; e.g., housebroken, enjoys car rides, etc.
- Most general information contained in memos; e.g., “Bubby loves kids but needs to be indoors.”
- Reasons the animal came in; e.g., transfers, owner was moving, etc.
- Medical information; e.g., if the animal is being treated for an upper respiratory infection.
- Basic and positive information

*When relaying the above information, please make sure not to word it as “X dog is bad with kids” or “X cat had house soiling issues”. Please let the potential owner know there is a note about their behavior in their previous home that the adoption counselor will discuss in more detail.

Common Abbreviations
M – Male  
N/M – Neutered Male  
F – Female  
S/F – Spayed Female

We DO NOT Release:
- The name or any identifying information about the person who turned in the animal.
- The likelihood of an animal on hold being adopted (or not adopted).

Staff and Volunteer Guidelines for Releasing Information on Unavailable Animals
Script:
“These animals are not currently available for adoption and we don’t know when or if they will become available. I know it must be frustrating for you to see these animals but we are fortunate to have this space to help save more animals.”

Reasons these animals are not available in general:
- Are not the League’s property yet.
- May not be adoptable through the League and we are therefore looking into other resources.
• May be waiting for further medical and behavior evaluations.

If patron requests further explanation, give out the following information:
• If the dog is awaiting rescue you can tell patrons, “It appears that the dog will not be available for adoption through the League and we are assessing what other resources we have at this time.” DO NOT give out information as to what group is potentially picking up the dog.
• If 12 puppies are on calm down as they were just transferred in, you can tell patrons, “These puppies need to have further medical and behavior evaluations before we know if they will be in our adoption program. Unfortunately, we do not know what the outcome will be at this time. Please check out our adoptable animals in the available kennels or online.”

DO NOT tell a patron that an animal will be available on the due-out date that is typed in the Chameleon kennel window intake section. This date often changes and the animal may not even go up for adoption. We’ve had many disappointed patrons come in because they are told the animal will be available on a specific day. If you do mention the due-out day you must make it clear that at this time the animal is scheduled to be re-evaluated on this day but that this can change without notice.

If a patron REALLY wants to be considered to adopt an unavailable animal, please get his/her name, phone number, and the animal ID, and give this information to a Buddy Center Supervisor or Director. The supervisor or Director will contact the patron and work out any arrangements if appropriate. Please remind patron that we do not know if or when the animal will be available.

See a supervisor with any specific questions you are not able to answer.
**If you don’t know – don’t guess!**

### 3. Sign In

All patrons must sign in to be eligible to visit with an animal and meet with a counselor. Visits are designated in the order that patrons sign up on the sign-in sheet. Patrons sign in at the adoption information desk. Always verify the patrons name and address with a government issued ID, confirm current address, and update P#.

**Manual Sign-In:** If the patron has previously visited the Dumb Friends League, he/she should be in the database. To prevent creating multiple P#s, a patron’s information can be looked up in Chameleon using his/her phone number or name under the window “Person.”

Have the patron fill out the Patron Information card and manually enter him/her into the daily sign-in sheet. After he/she is on the sign-in sheet, take the patron information card and put it in order of check in on the adoptions desk. If the patron does not have a P# the adoption counselor will create it at the time of adoption.

**Looking Up the P#**
- Start from the main kennel screen in Chameleon.
- Pop-up (F4) in the Owner ID or Person From box.
- Search by one of three fields—name, address, or phone number.

**Searching by Name**
- Put your cursor in the Field 1, Last Name
• Type in patron’s last name
• Hit “F12” to search
If patron has a common last name, try searching by last name and the first letter of the first name; e.g., search for Alan Smith by “Smith, A.” First name information goes in Field 2. If the name is really common—John Smith, for example—try searching on both names. Hit “F12” again.

If you find a last name that’s a match, e.g., “Dowling,” compare the address, date of birth (Field 6) and phone number. Even if the first name isn’t a match, if the address or phone number matches, chances are it’s the same household. Write the patron number on the back of the yellow card in the upper right hand corner in the space allotted for it.

Searching by Address
• Type the street number in Field 3 and the street name in Field 4
• Hit “F12” to search
If you find an address match where the phone number is the same as what the patron wrote on the card, it’s probably the same household, even if the names are different.

Searching by Phone Number
• Type the phone number in Field 5 (you do not have to enter the area code, just the number)
• Hit “F12” to search
If a match is found, check the address. If the address matches, it’s probably the same household, even if the name is different. Write the P# on the card. If a match is found but the address is different, it might not be the same person. Write the P# on the card in pencil with “possibly” written next to it. Make sure to notify the adoption counselor when they come to meet with the patron.

4. Assigned to an Adoption Room and Counselor
   Steps for Cat and Dog
   • Patron comes to desk. Patron fills out Patron Information card.
   • Patron Information card is placed on desk in order of check in.
   • Note which animals patron wishes to meet by kennel number so the counselor can look the animal up before calling the patron. Counselors routinely check the desk to take the next patron.

5. Counsel
   Completed by adoption counseling staff
   • Adoption counselors will take patrons to an assigned room.

6. Adoption
   If the animal is already spayed/neutered, the animal can go home with the patron that day. If the animal is not spayed/neutered, it is taken to the Veterinary Services department to wait for the next surgery. The animal may be picked up from the lobby the day after the scheduled surgery, between 4 and 6 p.m. Surgery days are Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
Additional Duties:

1. Answering phones, placing caller on hold and using paging system
2. Contact staff for community service inquiries.
3. Receiving donations, filling out donation receipts, taking cash donations.
4. Ringing up store sales and adoptions
5. Place animal holds in Chameleon
6. Periodically check on holds during the day to see if they have expired.
7. Check task sheet for additional duties that can be done if not busy.

Examples of Difficult Scenarios and How to Deal with them

A patron comes in with some information from our Web site on a dog in Lost and Found. The patron wants to know when the dog will be coming up for adoption and if we will put it on hold.

We don’t know if or when the dog will come up for adoption and we can’t put a hold on it. Suggest that the patron may keep checking for the dog on our Web site under “Adoptable Animals.”

A patron arrives to look at a puppy that’s on hold. You explain that the animal is on hold and not available for adoption. The patron says that he/she has been trying to visit with this animal for two days and would like to know when the hold comes off.

First, ask if there are any other animals in which the patron is interested. Explain that the League receives a lot of animals and it’s possible to find another animal to adopt. If the patron persists, give the time the hold expires. If you share this information, make it clear that there is no guarantee that the patron will get to see the animal or adopt it. Explain that the hold will likely be picked up and if it’s not, anyone on the sign-in is sheet prior to that patron has priority to visit with the animal. This is true even if the people who signed in prior to the patron did not specifically list this animal on their sheet. Use discretion if you decide to release the time an animal is scheduled to come off hold.

A man signs in to see a dog coming off hold status. He signs in three hours early and asks you what the chances are the dog will come off hold and be available again. The animal is on hold for a dog visit and you know that this dog is not great with other dogs and will probably not do well in the dog visit. Do you share this information with him?

No. We don’t speculate or release any information on the likelihood of a hold being picked up. If the dog visit works out, the inquiring patron will be disappointed or angry. Even if you know a hold probably is going to be picked up, don’t release that information.

A woman comes in and sees a black cat in the adoption area that looks like the one she lost. This particular cat came in as an owner-surrender. The patron suspects the cat is hers and her neighbor turned it in. She asks for the name of the previous owner. When you explain that you cannot release this, she asks for the name of the street of the person who relinquished the cat.

Do not provide this information. It compromises the confidentiality of the patron who relinquished the cat. Offer to get a senior counselor or manager to speak with her.
A patron comes in inquiring about a dog. She has several small children with her and the dog she’s interested in has a child restriction on it. You tell her about the restriction and she doesn’t believe it. She leans over the counter and asks to see the screen so she can see it for herself. Do you turn the screen around to show her?

No. There is confidential information that would be visible, e.g., the name of the person who turned the dog in. If the restriction is also written on the animal’s kennel card, you may show her that but she cannot view the computer screen.

If a patron signs in to visit with a particular animal, there is no guarantee that the animal will be available when the patron is called into his/her adoption counsel.