

CATS HAVEN VOLUNTEER GUIDE

Cats Haven is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

2603 N. College Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46205
(317) 925-7001
www.CatsHaven.org

HOURS OF OPERATION

MONDAY 11 AM – 4 PM
TUESDAY-FRIDAY 11 AM – 6 PM
SATURDAY 11 AM – 4 PM
SUNDAY **CLOSED**



Our Mission

Cats Haven's mission is to provide a non-institutional (cage free) sanctuary primarily for special need cats and elderly cats that are accepted from other facilities and organizations. Cats Haven provides its' residents with a life-long, safe, clean, and loving environment. Cats Haven strives to educate the public about the quality of life for special needs or senior animal companions, the importance of spaying and neutering and about other available resources for pet owners.

WELCOME

Welcome and thank you for your interest in volunteering at Cats Haven! Your concern for the health and well-being of the cats at the shelter is greatly appreciated. It is our goal to provide the necessary care to maintain and improve the health of each cat in our care. It is also our hope to give each cat some personal attention and love. With your help we can more effectively accomplish these goals and provide the cats a clean and loving home-like environment.

DESCRIPTION

Cats Haven is the oldest no-kill cat shelter in Central Indiana and provides an open atmosphere sanctuary for primarily special needs cats and kittens – most with physical challenges. Many of the cats are senior cats that have outlived their owners or were no longer wanted. Some of the cats are adoptable but most will live out their lives in our care.

We do not take cats and kittens from the public. Our feline residents come to us through other facilities in Indiana as well as throughout the country.

Here are some facts about Cats Haven:

- CH was started over 25 years ago.
- We became incorporated in July of 2001.
- CH was one of the first shelters in Indiana to make senior and special-needs cats their primary focus.
- We were the first “open” concept (aka free roaming) shelter for cats.
- CH is the only known private non-profit shelter that currently does Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) and was the first in central Indiana to implement TNR.
- CH has also been a pet food pantry since its inception.
- We are the first known private shelter to spay or neuter before adoption.
- If funds allow, the shelter will help pay reasonable medical bills of pets whose owners are trying to keep their pet in the home.

It is a cage-free environment, unless it is medically necessary. All cats are spayed or neutered soon after arrival - if not already. Cats Haven does not advocate declawing and states such in all adoption agreements and is a condition of actual adoption.

An extensive health assessment and history of each cat is made prior to acceptance to the main facility or foster and hospice homes. All vaccinations and necessary medical treatment is administered prior to integration with the general cat population. Cats are accepted or declined based upon the assessment of each situation by the veterinarians who work with Cats Haven and the caretaker.

CH houses 90 - 100 cats on average at the shelter. About 30 cats are fostered in homes and some of those are available for adoption. Multiple registered feral colonies are overseen and provided for by Cats Haven. These are located in Brownsburg, Cicero, and Indianapolis (the shelter’s area and two in Fountain Square). Of the 300 or so cats cared for by Cats Haven, approximately 50 are in hospice situations.

The shelter currently uses approximately 600 pounds of litter, 5 cases of canned food, 45 pouches of soft food and 260 pounds of dry cat food per week. In addition, the shelter provides approximately 55 pounds of litter, 36 cans of food and 70 pounds of dry cat food per week for the cats in foster homes. CH also provides all medical treatment for the fostered and hospice cats.

A comfortable, safe and healthy environment for all of the cats is paramount. Many cats require individual attention while many feral cats choose to remain outside the facility or inside where they feel most comfortable. Intravenous fluids and other necessary medical treatments that can be administered on-site are given by the caretaker/staff and the staff vet tech who is at the shelter 4 days per week.

Cats Haven has an ongoing relationship with The Cat Doctor, Emerson Pet Clinic, Mass Avenue Animal Clinic, Hamilton Hills Animal Hospital and Zionsville Countryside Animal Clinic. CH works closely with many other animal shelters and rescues in the Central Indiana area. There is an ongoing Memorandum of Understanding with the Indianapolis Human Society, Indianapolis Animal Care and Control, Indy Feral and F.A.C.E. The shelter has even helped place and transport cats from other states and outside the United States.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Volunteers are an integral part of the success of the mission of Cats Haven and its continued impact in the community. In order to assist Cats Haven and promote the shelter in the best possible manner, we ask that all volunteers abide by the following guidelines:

1. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.
2. Volunteers must support the philosophies and policies held by Cats Haven.
3. Any volunteer found to be disruptive, rude or intrusive will be asked to leave.
4. Cats and kittens are to be treated kindly, gently and professionally.
5. Our volunteers are expected to take their commitment seriously and conduct themselves in a professional manner with the cats, other volunteers, and the public.
6. No volunteer shall remove any animal from the premises without permission of the Director. If permission is granted, it will be for that time only.
7. Volunteers will not commit to accepting any animals into the shelter at any time. All animal surrenders must go through the Director of Cats Haven.
8. Volunteers must be advocates of spaying and neutering with their own pets.
9. Each volunteer must sign a liability release form.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

Any accident or injury occurring while volunteering must be reported to the Director immediately. Bites and scratches are considered an injury and must be reported. Additionally, any injured or ill cat should be reported to the Director or a senior volunteer immediately.

It is highly recommended that all volunteers have a current tetanus shot.

PROPER ATTIRE

Clothes that you don't mind getting dirty are always suggested. Even if you are not directly involved in the messier volunteer activities, others around you may be painting or cleaning which may get your clothes dirty.

Long pants or jeans are recommended when working both inside and outside of the shelter. Closed-toed shoes are highly recommended when working and/or cleaning in the shelter house. It is best to bring an old pair of shoes to change into when entering the facility and then change back into your original shoes when leaving.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Cleaning/housekeeping

Basic cleaning is fundamentally necessary in order to guarantee the comfort and health of the cats. With such a large number of cats that require bedding, clean litter, and clean water and food bowls, this task is critical. Basic cleaning includes, but is not limited to, vacuuming, mopping, cleaning litter pans, cleaning cages, brushing cat trees, and washing and refilling water and food bowls. All of these things are essential in order to keep the shelter clean and the cats in a hygienic and healthy environment. Always check with the cleaning staff to see what help is immediately needed when arriving.

Fundraising

Cats Haven is supported entirely by donations, grants, and volunteers. We are always in need of financial support to help us continue to provide for so many cats.

Asking businesses and corporations for donations and sponsorships can potentially bring in funding to Cats Haven. Knowledge of the shelter's mission, accomplishments, and what each donation will be used for are essential. Individuals and companies must always have adequate information as to what their donation will do for the shelter. Anyone interested in promoting the continuing needs of Cats Haven could hugely impact the shelter and its future. New ideas and approaches are always welcomed.

Cats Haven not only benefits from monetary donations but also donations of cat food, litter, cleaning products, medical supplies, etc.

Always be sure to get approval of any fundraising activities from the Director prior to implementing. The Director of Cats Haven will oversee any funds that are donated or collected. All monies must and will be accounted for.

Special Events

Special events are activities that volunteers can organize or attend to increase the public awareness of Cats Haven. In addition to enhancing the community visibility of Cats Haven, recruiting volunteers, emphasizing spaying and neutering, and encouraging fostering and adoption, these events are also an invaluable way to seek donations.

This is an excellent opportunity for those who cannot help out at the shelter but would like to devote time to promote the shelter and its mission.

We regularly attend and host a booth at the *Indianapolis Gift and Hobby Show* in November and at the *Indiana Flower and Patio Show* in March. Each of these events require many volunteer hours, but the community exposure is invaluable to the shelter.

We also have two annual open houses for the public in May and December. Cats Haven recently added a new event *Hot Dogs and Cool Cats* held in September. Other events are continually being added.

Always be sure to get approval for any special event from the Director.

Human Education/Community Outreach

The community we serve needs to be more informed when it comes to the importance of spaying and neutering domestic and feral cats and caring for special-needs and elderly cats. Many people are not knowledgeable when it comes to helping control the pet population. As a result, there is a high number of cats that are homeless, abused, or in need of medical care.

One of Cats Haven's main goals is to find new and innovative ways to educate the public about the availability and importance of spaying and neutering and caring for their companion pets. Anyone interested in attending public events or developing or strengthening working relationships with other community organizations could greatly contribute to Cats Haven. Education about cat overpopulation and the unique work that Cats Haven does is a continuing and challenging goal.

Grant Research

There are opportunities for funding but sometimes finding them takes creativity and time-consuming research. No prior experience is needed, but knowledge of the goals and basic functions of Cats Haven would be necessary. All information and support would be provided and help in this area would be greatly appreciated.

Grooming

Grooming may include brushing, eye cleaning, bathing, ear cleaning, and nail trimming. Each cat offers its own challenge, and caution needs to be used when handling any of the cats for grooming purposes. Many enjoy brushing, but other grooming needs to be approached with knowledge that these cats know what you are about to do. Have another volunteer help when attempting nail trimming. *No excessive force shall be used by any volunteer on the cats when trying to groom.* If the cat is particularly difficult and definitely needs to be groomed, please notify a senior volunteer, the Vet Tech, or the Director.

Special Projects

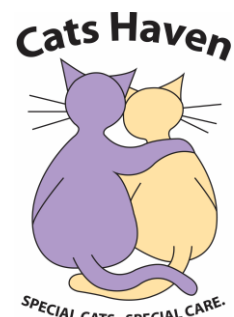
Painting, repairing walls, building shelves, and weeding and planting in the warmer months are just some of the special projects that are almost always taking place at the shelter. With an aging house, there are repairs and updates to be done. If you or someone you know (or a company) would be interested in funding any of our projects, please contact us.

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LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

Date: _____

Participant (please print): _____

Company/School/Other: _____

I, _____ understand that participation could include actions or tasks which might be hazardous to the participant named above.

By signing below, I assume any risk of harm or injury which might occur to the participant due to their participation in volunteering. I release Cats Haven from all liability, costs and damages which might arise from my participation.

Participant Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (*if applicable*): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

