

Austin Animal Center

Workplace Culture Expectations

Create and Maintain a Safe Workplace:

- Take responsibility for keeping yourself, coworkers, volunteers, visitors and animals safe.
- Be part of creating and maintaining a culture of safety, even when you're in a hurry.
- Know your own limitations and seek help when needed.
- Bring safety concerns to the attention of your supervisor.

Strive for Excellence

- Make customer service a priority and strive to constantly improve the customer experience, both internally and externally.
- Be willing to continue to learn and improve oneself professionally through training, reading and other learning opportunities.
- Educate yourself on national and regional best practices in animal welfare.
- Be thorough, careful and precise in all work.
- Think and act constructively and look for solutions to make things better for animals and people.

Support a Collaborative Animal Shelter:

- Practice "we" thinking. We achieve goals together or not at all.
- Understand that whether as an individual or work groups, we all share the same goals and play different, valuable roles in achieving them.
- Support, mentor and uplift coworkers.
- When faced with conflict with individuals or between teams, focus on the situation or problem rather than the individual(s).
- Maintain constructive relationships with coworkers and between teams.
- Lead by example.
- Set each other up for success by sharing information, helping each other and keeping workspaces organized and stocked with supplies.

Demonstrate a Commitment to Healthy Communication:

- Communicate with staff, volunteers, other professionals and the public in a professional, positive and helpful manner.
- Respond to emails, phone calls and in-person requests in a timely manner.
- Deliver and receive complaints, suggestions and other communications in a respectful and open-minded manner.
- Share information that affects others with them in a timely manner.
- Take a stand to stop gossip, grudges, cliques, conflicts and negativity and be part of solutions.
- Take time to listen and understand before responding.

Be Respectful:

- Respect different opinions and workstyles.
- Respect decisions made and directives given.
- Show compassion for and have patience with your co-workers.
- Respect all employees and volunteers equally, regardless of job title, seniority, position or opinion.

- Expect differences, know differences are not wrong and how to handle conflict with individuals or teams constructively.
- Look for the contribution each person makes in helping animals and people in need.

Promote Trust:

- Take responsibility for yourself and be accountable for your own actions.
- Commit to working for a safe, humane future for animals and people.
- Build trust in all your interactions, regardless of who they are with.
- If you have questions or concerns, communicate upward, rather than complaining to or gossiping with others.
- Provide accurate, thorough, objective documentation.
- Follow instructions carefully, meet deadlines when assigned.
- Ask for help and training when you don't understand something.

Acknowledge the Emotional Aspect of Our Work:

- Remember to have a sense of humor, but never at the expense of others or professionalism.
- Identify healthy ways to reduce and relieve stress.
- Take care of yourself, paying attention to your work/life balance.
- Find appropriate ways to express strong emotions as they arise.
- Respect others' response to emotions - they may be different than yours.
- Treat your colleagues as members of your Animal Services family.
- Have fun!

Show Appreciation:

- Remember why you have chosen to work in animal welfare.
- Practice appreciation at all levels and every day.
- Acknowledge people when they do good things. Shout-outs should be a daily occurrence!
- Thank others when they make your day better and brighter.

Be Safe and Compassionate When Handling Animals:

- Treat all animals in your care with patience, kindness and compassion.
- Become adept at reading animal behavior to make sound, safe handling decisions.
- Pursue and take advantage of training opportunities offered at the shelter to help you become a better animal handler.
- Recognize each animal is an individual and should be treated as such. Avoid stereotypes and generalizations about breed, type, etc.
- Model safe, humane handling to other staff, volunteers and the public. You are the expert.

"I acknowledge I have received, read and understand the AAC Workplace Culture Agreement and I agree to follow it."

Name (please print legibly)_____

Signature_____ **Date**_____