



Volunteer Orientation

North Shore Animal League America
Adirondack Region Cat Adoption Center



Welcome!

Since 1944, North Shore Animal League America has saved the lives of more than 1,100,000 innocent dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens to date. We have an unwavering commitment to rescue, nurture and adopt homeless companion animals and educate the public. We are:

- The world's largest no-kill animal rescue and adoption organization
- A leader in the no-kill movement, rescuing and rehabilitating animals instead of euthanizing them
- An innovator in animal welfare to create a more sustainable world for all companion animals
- A strong voice, elevating the status and promoting the acceptance of mixed-breed animals — Mutt-i-grees® — through advocacy and education
- A collaborative organization that's built a national network of shelter and rescue partners
- A trusted source for information, education, and resources that increase adoptions and enhance the lives of adopters and their pets



North Shore Animal League America: Mission, Vision and Values

Our Vision: A future in which all companion animals find responsible, loving homes where they are free from abuse, hunger, fear, and loneliness and receive the care and respect they deserve.

Our Mission: Rescue, Nurture, Adopt, And Educate!

What We Value:

- The inherent worth of all companion animals.
- The principles and goals of the no-kill movement, which we've pioneered since our founding in 1944.
- The richness and complexity of the human-animal bond.
- The power of humane education, which is the heart of our Mut-i-grees curriculum. Mutt-i-grees's social-emotional learning program developed in collaboration with Yale University's School of the 21st Century, is the intellectual path to a no-kill future.
- Our global network of rescue partners with whom we share our decades of experience and expertise.
- Innovation, a hallmark of our more than seven decades of leadership in animal welfare.
- The generous support of our friends and donors, and volunteers and the vital role they play in enriching the lives of companion animals and the people who love them.
- Honesty, diversity, integrity, transparency, and sustainability.



Our History

Founded in 1944, North Shore Animal League America is the largest, most comprehensive no-kill rescue and adoption organization in the world, with more than 2,000 shelter partners across the country and around the globe. Headquartered in Port Washington, N.Y., we rescue, nurture, and adopt nearly 18,000 pets annually into responsible, loving homes, plus assist in the adoptions of thousands more through our global partnerships. Over the years, we've introduced lifesaving best practices such as mobile adoptions, off-site adoptions, puppy mill rescues, national low-cost spay/neuter referrals, humane relocations, the Mutt-i-grees Curriculum (a transformative humane education program based on social-emotional learning and the natural affinity between children and animals) and our most recent program, [The North Country Initiative](#).



NORTH COUNTRY INITIATIVE

OUR MISSION: RESCUE NURTURE ADOPT EDUCATE

In 2015, a severe cat overpopulation problem was identified in Warren County, and the surrounding communities. North Shore Animal League America stepped in to help. The North Country Initiative (NCI) was created to help reduce this overpopulation and the suffering that coincides. This is being accomplished through:

- The operation of a no-kill rescue and adoption center
- Implementation of a series of programs to assist with the needs of homeless felines and feral cat colonies in the region
- A focus on spay and neuter to reduce the cat overpopulation and the suffering that coincides



TO DATE OVER 5,300 FELINES RESCUED LOCALLY

- from suffering and untimely death
- from situations such as hunger, homelessness, lack of medical care
- From neglect, injury and/or illness.
- Most are trapped from properties with severe cat overpopulation or as strays abandoned by their previous owners
- Many are surrendered by owners who can no longer care for them
- Some are born in foster care from rescued pregnant felines

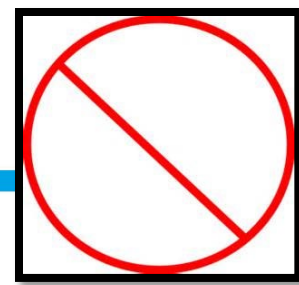
Conduct

All volunteers and employees are required to conduct themselves in a proper and professional manner to promote the best interests of North Shore Animal League America at all times.



- Report to your volunteer shift *on time and as scheduled*.
- Notify the Volunteer Office when you are unable to volunteer during your normally scheduled shift, with as much notice as possible.
- Comply with all NSALA safety, security and operating rules
- There is no smoking allowed on premises at 115 Maple Street.
- Wear your appropriate red volunteer shirt/sweatshirt.
- Maintain workplace and work area cleanliness.
- Treat all customers, visitors, employees and volunteers in a courteous manner.
- Refrain from behavior or conduct deemed offensive, undesirable or contrary to Animal League America's best interests.
- Perform assigned tasks efficiently and to the satisfaction of your Adirondack Region managers and volunteer coordinator.
- Report to management all suspicious, unethical or illegal conduct by employees, volunteers or adopters.

Conduct that is NOT permitted



This list is not intended to be all inclusive. ANY violation of North Shore Animal League America's policies, at management's discretion, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- Mistreatment of or endangering the life of any animal
- Unauthorized use, distribution, sale or possession of alcohol or drugs on the premises; reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Theft or unauthorized possession of Animal League America property or the property of fellow volunteers or employees
- Unauthorized possession of or removal of Animal League America property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission
- Fighting, assaulting, threatening or intimidating a co-worker, volunteer or adopter
- Refusing to follow management's instructions concerning a job-related matter or other forms of insubordination
- Falsifying or altering NSALA records or reports (i.e., applications, time-clock punches), or having someone else falsify a record on your behalf
- Using profanity or abusive language
- Displaying intolerance, bigotry, hostility or different treatment toward any particular gender, ethnic, religious, racial or other protected group
- Possessing firearms or any other weapon on NSALA property
- Destruction, defacement, misuse or unauthorized use, possession or removal of NSALA, co-worker or adopter property
- Failure to abide by safety rules and policies

Conduct that is NOT permitted (cont.)

- Failure to maintain proper attire or appropriate personal appearance
- Engaging in any form of sexual or other harassment
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Violating NSALA solicitation or distribution policies
- Undermining the authority of a manager
- Mistreating a fellow volunteer, associate or adopter
- Using cell phones (including texting) while working is prohibited
- Eating, drinking, or gum chewing when working with animals and the public is prohibited

NO SMOKING Policy

The North Shore Animal League America Adirondack Region Cat Adoption Center facility is a smoke-free work environment. Therefore, smoking or other use of tobacco products (including but not limited to electronic cigarettes, pipes, cigars, snuff, or chewing tobacco) is prohibited inside all Animal League America facilities and on the grounds; at off-site events; or in vehicles owned, leased or rented by Animal League America. All volunteers are expected to abide by this policy before, during and after their shifts

Any violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.



Reading Program / Minors (all volunteers under the age of 18)

A minor MUST:

- Follow the guidelines established within the *reading program*:
- Return training acknowledgments forms signed by your parent or guardian BEFORE his or her first volunteer shift or be sent home.
- Wear your program badge.
- Check in with the Volunteer Coordinator and/ or a Volunteer Team Leader before and after each shift.
- Exhibit mature and professional behavior at all times during the shift.
- Perform the duties required of volunteers in the appointed location.

North Shore Animal League America is responsible for all minors during their volunteer time, therefore we ask that all minors:

- Remain in the shelter building during the entire duration of the scheduled shift – except when otherwise requested (i.e. to empty trash in dumpster).
- Bring lunch or any other needed items with you.

Letters of Reference

If you would like a letter of reference verifying your volunteer hours, we would be more than happy to provide one for you!

We kindly ask that you email our Volunteer Coordinator at volunteeradk@animalleague.org with at least one-to-two week's notice. We can either scan or mail the letter to you, or you can pick it up during your shift.

PLEASE do not wait until the last minute to ask for a letter of reference.



Personal Appearance, Personal Belongings, Uniforms and ID Cards

We will make every effort to accommodate a volunteer's religious or national customs that affect dress in the workplace. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Please adhere to the following standards:

- Your volunteer ID must be worn at all times clipped to the collar of your shirt
- Hair is to be clean, combed and neatly arranged
- All clothing is to be neat and clean
- Only closed-toe shoes are permitted. Socks or stockings are to be worn at all times
- Jewelry: for safety reasons, please avoid any dangling jewelry or facial piercings
- Tattoos: Management reserves the right to ask all volunteers to cover visible tattoos while working. Volunteers working outside or in areas that are not air conditioned are exempt from this policy during the summer months

We ask that you refrain from bringing with you anything of value; it is best to leave anything of value either at home or within your vehicle, as we do not currently have a secure place to store belongings.



To maintain security and protect against theft, North Shore Animal League America reserves the right to inspect all personal property brought on our premises; this includes vehicles, packages, briefcases, backpacks, purses, bags, and wallets. Any items in violation of Animal League America rules and policies will be removed. Animal League America is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Attendance Tracking

All accepted volunteers agree to commit to a minimum 4 hours per week. Attendance is monitored because a specific amount of staffing is required to care for the animals every day of every week.

If you cannot be here for a particular week, please call or email Volunteer Coordinator at (phone: 516-547-2228 , email: volunteeradk@animalleague.org) with as much notice as possible. It is expected that you make up any missed hours when you can; there are always special events throughout the year when we need extra volunteers to assist.

Volunteer attendance is recorded by clocking in at the Volunteer TimeClock; if you are on North Shore Animal League America property for a training class or are working with the animals in any way, you must clock in. Volunteers who are not clocked are not allowed to handle animals. Volunteers who are not fulfilling their commitment in a responsible way will not be able to continue at Animal League America.



Resignations: In the event that you must resign, although we will be sad to see you go, kindly send us an email stating the date and reason you wish to leave:
volunteeradk@animalleague.org.

ACCIDENT REPORTING AND SAFETY

Volunteers are required to report all accidents that occur on the North Shore Animal League America premises immediately, no matter how minor (eg. bites, scratches, cuts, slips or falls).

An accident report form must be completed on the same day as the injury, and a photo must be taken of all visible injuries.

Minor injuries that require first aid will be treated on-site; more serious injuries can be treated a facility recommended by NSALA staff or a facility of the volunteer's choosing.

Safety Use of Chemicals:

As a volunteer, you are expected to comply with departmental safety procedures and to report to a manager any apparent safety problems. Animal League America uses a variety of cleaning solutions, medications and other chemical substances with which you may come into contact with. Each material we receive is accompanied by a manufacturer's "Safety Data Sheet" (SDS). These are located in the pink folder located in the cabinet underneath the volunteer timeclock.



Sexual and Other Harassment

North Shore Animal League America policy: harassment of an associate or volunteer by another associate or volunteer, a manager or even adopters or vendors based on sex, race, color, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, disability or any other personal trait is prohibited.

Forms of harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature (such as uninvited touching or comments), improper joking, teasing, or any other conduct that creates an unprofessional or hostile work environment.

Everyone will be held accountable for maintaining a harassment-free workplace.

Anyone who feels that he or she has been subjected to sexual or other forms of harassment, or has become aware of possible sexual harassment, should immediately report the matter to a manager or Human Resources.

Every report of actual or perceived harassment will be investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. No one will be retaliated against for making any reports under this policy.

Violations of this policy will not be permitted and will result in discipline up to and including termination.

Avoiding Interruptions: Solicitation

At North Shore Animal League America, volunteers should not be harassed, disturbed or disrupted in the performance of their duties. Everyone has the right to feel comfortable.

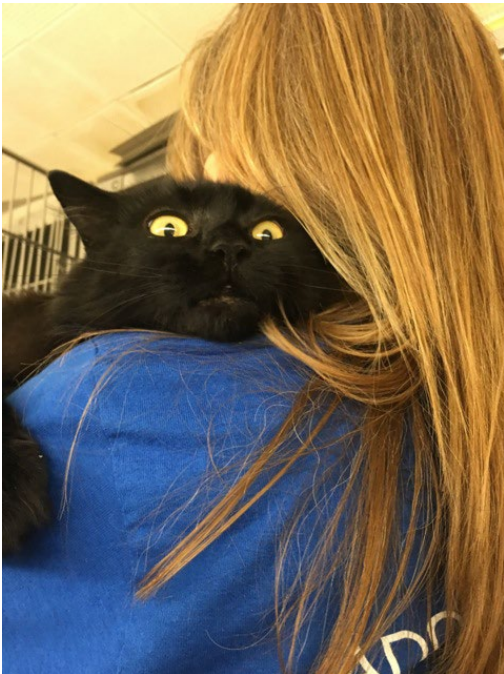
North Shore Animal League America prohibits the solicitation, distribution and posting of materials on or at company property by any employee, volunteer or non-employee. Violations of this policy should be reported to the Volunteer Office.

Problem-Resolution and Procedure

In our continuing effort to provide you with a rewarding volunteer experience and a pleasant work environment, we ask that you bring all suggestions, problems, or complaints to the attention of the Volunteer Coordinator.

Work-related issues can only be resolved when the appropriate party is made aware of the situation. With that in mind, please feel free to voice your concerns whenever necessary through open and constructive discussions with Volunteer Coordinator or our Jennifer, our Adoption Center Manager.

No one will be retaliated against for making a complaint or voicing a concern. The situation will be appropriately addressed from that point, ensuring a satisfactory solution for all involved.



Volunteer Use of Social Media/Parking

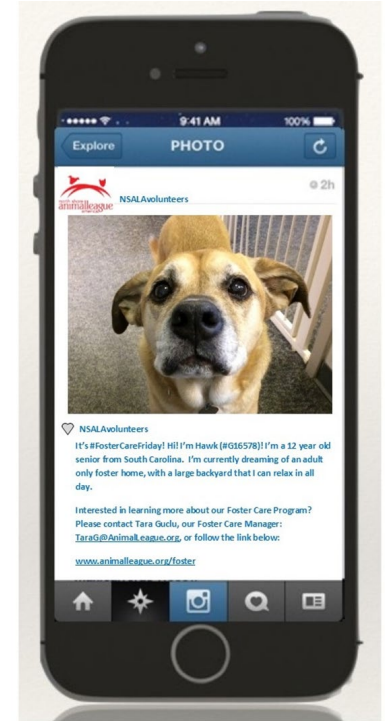
North Shore Animal League America encourages staff members and volunteers to use the internet to blog and talk about our organization, our services and YOUR work. Through the use of social media, we strive to encourage support of our services and programs.

All volunteers have an obligation to Animal League America to ensure any public communication they make, including social media networking communications, must not negatively impact the reputation of Animal League America, or bring negativity in any way to our organization.

If you would not say it on the radio or television, or have a reporter write it in a column, please do not tweet it, post it on Facebook, post it on Instagram, or post it on any public web page.

Do not engage in public criticism or disparagement of Animal League America, its personnel, customers, partners, suppliers or competitors.

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary actions which may include termination, depending on the severity of the situation and its impact on Animal League America.



PARKING: Our facility at 115 Maple Street has a small parking lot in the rear to the facility for the convenience of volunteers, associates, adopters and visitors. If you find the parking lot full or near full during our open hours please reserve the empty spaces for our potential adopters. Please park your car during these times on Pearl Street

Adoption and Animal Policies

Adoption by Volunteers:

- We LOVE IT when volunteers fall in love with our rescue animals; we have a 90 day adoption waiting period in place beginning on your Orientation date. If a volunteer is interested in an animal, he/she must complete an application and be approved by the Adoption Center Manager.

Referring Potential Adopters

- **North Shore Animal League America encourages and welcomes all volunteer adoption referrals. We ask that you please understand: it is possible that not all of your referrals will be approved to adopt one of our animals.**
- To ensure that our animals are placed into the best possible home, Animal League America has gone to great lengths to establish guidelines and prerequisites for our adoptions. References are always contacted to confirm the accuracy of the information supplied on the adoption application.
- **To prevent a volunteer from becoming personally involved, volunteer assistance is prohibited during the completion of the adoption application and during the interview/screening process.**
- Interfering with the adoption process will be viewed as a violation of Animal League America policy.



Accepting Unauthorized Animals into NSALA

During the course of our normal business hours, many people bring animals to us in hopes that we will admit them and find them good homes. These people are required to **call first** so we can determine the adoptability of the animal and then, if necessary, schedule an appropriate time for them to bring the animal(s) in.

While we try our best to take in as many animals as we can, for various reasons, some animals may not be admitted (for example: aggressive behavior).

Under no circumstances are volunteers permitted to accept animals into North Shore Animal League America for themselves to adopt or for Animal League America to take into the shelter without authorization. If someone approaches you with animals, please find an **employee or manager**.



Cat Handling Procedures

SAFETY BASICS

- Never agitate or tease the cats.
- Do not put your face directly up to a cat in a habitat, cage or carrier.
- Do not engage with a cat you are not comfortable with. Ask a more experienced volunteer or staff associate to introduce you and the best way to approach that particular cat.
- Do not corner or force a cat that is nervous or uncooperative.
- Report signs of aggression (i.e. hissing, spitting, swatting, lunging etc.).
- If a cat latches on with teeth or claws, remain calm. Say, “NO”, in a low firm voice and slowly remove yourself from the cats grip.
- Report any injuries to management immediately and complete an incident report.
- Never use your hands to break up a cat fight. Use available cat gloves, cover the cat with a blanket then pick up and relocate one cat to nearest empty room/cage. Always check with staff first and have a plan in place prior to introducing cats to each other – identify the safe space before proceeding.

Become familiar before handling. For your safety and the safety of all NSALA animals, be aware of each cat’s behavior and circumstances surrounding any animal before attempting to handle it. . Be aware that a shelter environment can be stressful for the cat. Newly admitted animals or those recently recovering from surgery or illness will likely be even more uncomfortable than other animals.



Cat Handling Procedures/Signs of Stress

Ensuring the mental health of the felines in our care is just as important as ensuring their physical welfare.

Stress: Stress translates directly into disease, which can increase veterinary expenses and decrease adoptability. It is our responsibility to make sure that the animals in our care stay as stress-free as possible. All signs of stress should be addressed immediately, either by removing the stressor or adding enrichment. Please bring any signs of stress to the attention of staff.

Signs of stress:

Urinating/defecating outside of litter box

Extreme overstimulation or fear response at the sight of people or other animals

Barrier/kennel aggression

Repetitive behaviors such as pacing, spinning, licking

Being shut down, unresponsive, withdrawn or hiding

Under or over-grooming

Not eating

Cats using the litter box as a lounge (it is not normal for cats to lay in their litterboxes)

Excessive or inappropriate vocalizing (especially loud/repetitive sounds)

Cat Handling Procedures/Socialization & Enrichment

CAT SOCIALIZATION AND ENRICHMENT

Why is Socialization important?

Cats live longer, healthier lives as beloved indoor companions, and physical contact is important for establishing a close relationship between feline and their person(s). An affectionate, well socialized cat will be adopted more readily, making room for another cat to be rescued. Many of our cats have been neglected, mistreated or living outdoors, without human companions. As a result, they may need to be reminded that life with a loving human is a very good thing. (Reminder, all cats adopted from NSALA must be kept as indoor-only pets).



Why is enrichment important?

Enrichment is just as important as other components of animal care, such as nutrition and veterinary care. Cats are intelligent, thinking creatures. In order to be mentally healthy and happy we must reduce their stress and improve well being by providing them with engaging stimuli and encouraging species-typical behaviors. This can be as simple as being provided with entertainment they can enjoy on their own (balls, springs, scratching posts, paper bags, crumpled tissue paper, large bottle caps etc.) but should also include human-interactive games like a moving wand toy or string.

Cat Handling Procedures and Body Language

Cats are excellent mood readers so it is important for us to approach them with energy that is positive, loving, peaceful, calm, gentle, and if they are ready for it, playful. Cats at the Adoption Center have undergone major changes in their lives and are often stressed and scared. Some are not socialized and not yet comfortable with human interaction. As cute as they are, we must keep in mind that they are animals with teeth and claws. If we learn to understand the body language and other signals they use to communicate, we can greatly increase our chances of creating a positive experience for both human and cat. Below are some signs to look for:

Ears:

- A happy, relaxed cat has pointed up and slightly forward
- An irritated, anxious or frightened cat has ears that are sideways and partially flattened.
- When a cat's ears go back or are flat it is a sure sign of fear or anger and may act aggressively.





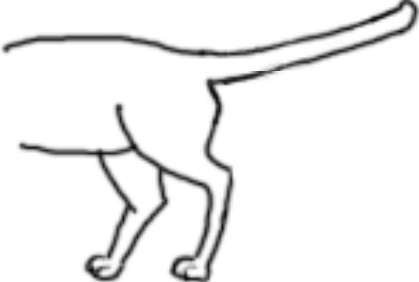
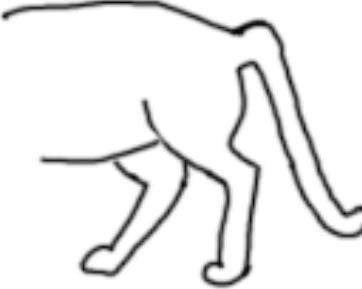


Eyes:







- Blinking eyes means more relaxed
- Wide eyes means the cat is scared or agitated.



The Telltale Tail

<p>friendly and content</p> 	<p>non-threatening, unsure</p> 	<p>derisive</p> 
<p>friendly, but unsure</p> 	<p>amicable, not fearful or aggressive</p> 	<p>defensive aggression</p> 

Cat Handling Procedures and Body Language (cont.)

<p>angry</p> 	<p>potentially aggressive</p> 	<p>submissive</p> 
<p>very happy to see you</p> 	<p>excited, angry or irritable</p> 	<p>alert, interested</p> 

catsmeowblog.com

YOU HAVE REACHED THE END OF YOUR ORIENTATION!

Please follow the link below to take your Orientation exit exam. The password to access the exam is **NCI2020**.

Upon passing your exit exam, you will be contacted by the Volunteer Office to set up a Basic Training date.

THANK YOU SO MUCH AND WELCOME ABOARD!
www.animalleague.org/ncivolunteerquiz

