



## **PetLinks Volunteer - Foster Carer**

### **Position Objectives**

To care for a PetLinks client's companion animal while they are unable to do so themselves, such as when they are in hospital or unwell.

The Volunteer Foster Carer will care for the animal in their own home, returning the animal to the client when they are able to again care for it themselves.

### **Key Responsibilities and Duties**

The PetLinks Volunteer Foster Carer will:

- Care for the companion animal as negotiated with the PetLinks client and the SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers
- Monitor the health of the PetLinks client's companion animal and advise the SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers if there are any concerns
- Volunteer a period of time on a regular basis, as negotiated with the Coordinator of Volunteers and client, to provide care and exercise of the client's pet.
- Monitor the wellbeing of the pet dog and liaise with the Coordinator of Volunteers if there are any concerns or issues that arise.
- Make contact with the client if you are unable to attend at the designated time, either by making direct contact with the client or via the Coordinator of Volunteers.
- Assist and encourage the client to care for their animal themselves as far as they are capable.
- Build a friendship with the client and to encourage social interaction.
- Participate in SPDL orientation, training and team activities.
- Notify the Volunteer Coordinator of any matter that limits their undertaking these duties.
- Apply SPDL policies and procedures while undertaking the volunteer role, especially in relation to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and reporting incidents, Anti-Discrimination and Privacy and Confidentiality policies.
- Be able to apply an active ageing approach to speaking and when dealing directly with older people
- Recognise the ability of a person with a disability and support them to reach their potential
- Behave in an appropriate respectful manner at all times and report any inappropriate behaviour by clients or other volunteers to SPDL team members
- Report any genuine concerns in relation to a client's emotional or physical health or situations of elder abuse
- Be aware of SPDL's Employment Assistance Program (EAP) and speak to the Volunteer Program Coordinator or General Manager confidentially should they believe they need personal support

*Foster care for a dog involves:*

- Providing food and water to the dog every day and following guidelines as provided by PetLinks in conjunction with the dog's owner
- Making sure the dog is adequately exercised
- Ensuring dog is always on a lead outside the home
- Scooping up dog droppings and responsibly disposing of them when exercising the animal in a public space.
- Reporting to the SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers if any signs of illness in the dog are suspected or if you have any concerns
- Transporting the animal to a veterinary surgeon if there is an emergency after consultation with SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers when possible

*Foster care for a cat involves:*

- Always keeping the cat inside your house
- Providing food and water and following the guidelines as provided by PetLinks in conjunction with the cat's owner.
- Reporting to the SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers if any signs of illness in the cat are suspected or if you have any concerns
- Transporting the animal to a veterinary surgeon if there is an emergency after consultation with SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers when possible.

**Accountability, Extent of Responsibility, Judgment and Decision Making:**

The volunteer foster carer is:

- Accountable to the Coordinator of Volunteers for the conduct and completion of tasks while undertaking the role.
- Responsible to work in a manner that complies with relevant legislation and relevant SPDL policies and procedures.
- Responsible to execute his/her duties and behave in a manner that promotes and maintains the excellent reputation and image of SPDL
- Responsible to operate within the role as per the agreed arrangements in liaison with the client

**Specialist skills and knowledge:**

The volunteer dog walker will:

- Possess or develop an understanding of the needs of people who are frail aged, have a disability or have mobility issues, and those that care for them.
- Have the capacity to carry out the required tasks as negotiated.

**Management skills:**

The volunteer foster carer will have:

- The ability to establish priorities and use time efficiently.
- The ability to set and maintain boundaries with the client.

## **Interpersonal skills:**

The volunteer foster carer will:

- Possess good listening and communication skills.
- Possess a caring attitude that demonstrates respect and patience in dealing with others.
- Be a trustworthy team member with a strong sense of responsibility and reliability.
- Have a commitment to the rights of others to have their personal information treated as strictly confidential.

## **Qualifications and Experience**

The PetLinks Volunteer Foster Carer will have:

- Experience in and enthusiasm for animals and their care.

## **Conditions of volunteer work with SPDL**

- The position as a PetLinks Foster Carer is a voluntary one.
- Volunteers will be reimbursed for all out of pocket and other reasonable expenses as agreed
- PetLinks Volunteer Foster Carers should expect regular support and contact from the SPDL Coordinator of Volunteers.
- An allowance of \$5 per visit may be made or can be donated back to SPDL

## **Key Selection Criteria**

The volunteer foster carer will have:

- A belief in the value of companion animals and their many benefits to a person's well being
- A demonstrated interest in animals and experience in their care
- Ability to apply SPDL policies and procedures
- A willingness to sign an agreement with SPDL and the client
- A willingness to undergo a police check