

Animal Care Assistant Job Description

Animal Care Assistants are responsible for assisting with the day-to-day care of hospitalized pets and for the cleanliness and sanitation of the Hospital. This includes feeding, watering, cleaning, walking, bathing, and monitoring the well being of dogs, cats and, occasionally, other companion animals. The ACA will also occasionally assist doctors and technicians with pet restraint for procedures or anesthesia induction. A love for animals and the ability to warmly welcome and compassionately care for a wide variety of pets is essential.

Animal Care Assistants need excellent communication and client service skills in order to admit and discharge pets and reassure nervous “parents” that their pets are well cared for at our facility. The ACA must remain professional and courteous to clients and co-workers while handling multiple tasks at once with many interruptions. ACAs must be able to empathize with clients and remain compassionate and well-mannered under all circumstances.

Animal Care Assistants should have a firm belief in the quality of care we provide and communicate this sense of assurance to our clients. The ACA must learn and understand our services and health recommendations and be able to clearly communicate these to our clients.

Animal Care Assistants must have sufficient physical strength, mobility, and stamina to lift and/or move heavy pets and objects, the dexterity and confidence to handle and administer medications or bathe pets who may be scared or aggressive, and the ability to monitor pets for signs of distress or disease.

Providing for the comfort of pets and sanitation of the facility by keeping the hospital clean and odor free is an essential part of the daily routine.

Essential Qualifications

- Employees must be responsible to work the schedule they are assigned. Excessive tardiness or truancy is disruptive to patient care and client service and can not be accommodated.
- All employees must be able to read, write legibly, and communicate clearly in English both in person and on the telephone. Employees must have good oral and written communication skills including the ability to listen, talk, write, type, and otherwise communicate with professionalism and tact. Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation are expected.
- Basic computer literacy including the ability to type on a computer keyboard, use a computer mouse, and view information on a computer screen is required.
- Must be able to read a street map and give directions to the practice.
- Employees must have the physical strength and ability to lift and carry a pet or other object weighing up to 50 pounds without assistance. Must be able to assist in lifting patients or other objects weighing more than 50 pounds.
- Must be able to work energetically for the entire assigned shift, sometimes exceeding 9 – 10 hours per day. The shift does not end until all duties are completed for the day or until a doctor or other supervisor dismisses the staff. Physical exertion will include repetitive standing, walking, stooping, bending, twisting, and lifting. Must be able to grasp, hold, and manipulate objects varying from small and fine to large and heavy with both hands.
- Employees must be able to safely and competently operate equipment pertinent to carrying out their duties.
- Employees must physically hold and restrain pets who may struggle, scratch, or try to bite. This requires the emotional ability to remain calm and compassionate with animals who are reacting to fear and/or pain and the physical strength, dexterity, and reflexes to keep the pet, themselves, and other doctors or staff safe.
- Employees must be able to view physical symptoms or medical problems, read medical instruments, and follow handwritten instructions.

- Employees must be able to respond and quickly react to frequent auditory signals, warnings, or communication from other staff, animals, or medical equipment.
- Employees must be able to make independent decisions and solve complex problems.

General Job Requirements

- Read and comply with the policies of the Blue Springs Animal Hospital Employee Handbook
- Follow all hospital and pet resort standard procedures and protocols, both current and future, as contained within the training manuals or as written or communicated by doctors or other supervisory staff
- Carry out all duties in a professional and courteous manner and remain respectful and polite in speech, tone, and actions under all circumstances
- Complete the employee training check lists and participate in performance reviews as requested
- Be teachable and accept performance critiques positively as a means to learn and grow
- Remain flexible and willing to implement new or changing procedures in the future
- Always be in position and ready to work promptly at the start of each scheduled shift
- Employees must be responsible to work the schedule they are assigned. Excessive tardiness or truancy is disruptive to pet care and client service and can not be accommodated for this position.
- Hourly employees must maintain accurate records of time worked by clocking in and out for each shift. Must track hours worked per week and inform a supervisor if extended shifts will result in over time.
- Maintain a groomed and neat professional appearance while at work, including a clean and unwrinkled uniform and a name tag.
- Every staff member is responsible to maintain the cleanliness and sanitary condition of the entire hospital, including the parking lot, side walks, and entries. Trash, urine, feces, blood or other such things should be cleaned and sanitized immediately.
- Employees of a veterinary hospital will encounter stressful situations including but not limited to emotional clients, pet emergencies, and managing multiple priorities at once. All staff members must be able to manage stress in order to carry out the duties of the job in a calm and professional manner.
- Employees will interact with many types of pets and should not be overly fearful of unfamiliar animals. All pets must be treated with kindness and respect at all times.
- Follow OSHA standards and be familiar with Material Data Safety Sheets. Occupational hazards may include but are not limited to animal bite or scratch wounds and exposure to x-rays, anesthetic gases, CO2 Laser, caustic or toxic materials, and zoonotic diseases. Employees must follow all safety guidelines contained in the employee handbook and posted in hazardous areas.
- Inform the Hospital Manager or a Doctor immediately of all bite or deep scratch wounds you suffer so that reports can be made and you can be referred for timely medical care by a physician if necessary. Clean all wounds quickly and thoroughly with surgical scrub.
- Remain productive during slow times by seeking additional duties such as cleaning, stocking, or other tasks. Ask your team coordinator or the hospital administrator for ideas.
- Learn and use BSAH & PR language and abbreviations for describing common services
- Be willing to volunteer for various management tasks or other duties that may be reasonably assigned from time to time
- Attend staff and team meetings; provide advance written notice to the hospital manager if a meeting will be missed; retrieve and study notes from any missed meetings and ask for clarification if anything from the meeting is unclear
- Train other staff members or new employees in the skills listed on this job description or in the training manual
- Attend continuing education opportunities if requested
- Follow established security protocols including locking and setting the alarm to ensure the safety and security of patients, staff, and the facility.
- Use your own password identification to enter the practice-management software and your own unique initials on all paperwork, camper care sheets, etc to signify your work
- Maintain a pleasant and cooperative attitude toward co-workers. Be willing to help any staff member with a task if requested.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding clients, patients, medical and financial records, and hospital and resort procedures, policies, and protocols.
- Maintain and project a positive attitude about the hospital & pet resort, clients, patients, and co-workers. Avoid gossiping, condemning, judging, and making negative comments or participating in such discussions. Negative feelings or concerns should be discussed with the team coordinator or Hospital Administrator. Instead of complaining about problems, strive to be part of the solution.

Pet Handling and Care

- Safely place a leash on dogs and transfer them between cages and locations and walk them outdoors for exercise and to eliminate. Keep pets safely under your control at all times.
- Safely move cats between carriers and kitty cages
- Follow directions on the treatment sheets for the care and feeding of boarding or hospitalized pets

Blue Springs Animal Hospital & Pet Resort
 1201 W. 40 Highway Blue Springs, MO 64015
 (816) 229-1544

www.bluespringsanimalhospital.com

- Administer oral, ear, and eye medication as directed to boarders and hospitalized pets
- Observe and record pet's appetite, attitude, and elimination habits on treatment sheets
- Learn and report symptoms that would indicate a pet may be ill
- Learn to safely handle fearful/aggressive pets with compassion and respect
- Provide clean and sanitary facilities for pets including kennels, litter boxes, play areas, and exercise areas at all times. Clean and sanitize food and water dishes and litter boxes every day or more often if needed
- Care for the adoption kittens including keeping their rolling observation cage clean and providing them with food, water, and toys at all times. Transfer them to cages in the back in the evening and back up front for display in the morning.
- Monitor pets and kennels/cages for urine, feces, vomit, and blood. When noted, clean pets, runs, play areas, litter pans, and cages or runs immediately. Note incidents on treatment sheets.
- Collect specimens such as stool samples, voided urine, and ear swabs and submit to the lab
- Perform outpatient procedures such as nail trims, expressing anal glands, suture removals, taking temperatures, & cleaning ears
- Safely and humanely restrain the pet for exams, treatments, xrays, and ultrasound
- Observe and provide care for the doctor's hospitalized patients throughout the day. Make sure they are walked, fed, clean, and that their treatments are completed.
- Set up and assist with procedures such as IV catheters, anesthesia, euthanasia, minor surgeries, and other common treatments as directed by a doctor or technician

Anesthesia and Surgical Assistance

- Restrain patients for pre-anesthetic blood screen and anesthetic inductions.
- Learn and follow procedures to maintain aseptic surgical sites.
- Connect/disconnect and adjust anesthetic delivery as directed by doctor or technician.
- Ventilatory support (bagging) as directed by doctor or technician, especially for CPR.
- Aseptically supply surgeon w/suture, blade, etc.
- Monitor recovering patients, removing tube under direction of doctor or technician.
- Perform shear downs under supervision of the doctor or technician.
- Perform ancillary procedures on anesthetized patients as directed by doctor or technician, including subcutaneous injections, vaccinations, ear cleaning, nail trims, etc.
- Help maintain cleanliness of treatment area, surgery suite, and special treatment area throughout the day

Bathing and Grooming

- Perform nail trims on dogs and cats with the traditional nail clippers and Dremel tool.
- Express anal glands of dogs and cats.
- Clean ears.
- Brush out dogs and cats.
- Bathe cats and dogs using the Hydro Surge Bathing system and dryers according to written procedures.
- Properly apply flea treatments such as Frontline and Revolution.
- Keep tubs and grooming equipment clean and sanitary

Cleaning and Stocking Duties

- The entire facility must be kept clean and odor free at all times. Pet messes should be cleaned up immediately with cleaning solution to eliminate odor.
- Learn and follow written procedures for cleaning and disinfecting cages, runs, floors, etc
- Cages should be monitored and cleaned as soon as pets are discharged so that the cage is available for another patient
- Keep the outdoor potty walk area clean. Pick up solid waste daily and dispose of it as directed.
- Know all the cleaning products used, including their safe handling and proper use.
- Maintain a "lost and found" bin for items left behind by pets' owners. Tag and date each item.
- Complete items on the Daily Checklist every day
- Complete items on Weekly & Monthly Cleaning list as time allows.
- Monitor and add items that need to be restocked to the want list

Computer Skills

- Turn computer terminals on and off when needed.
- Invoice boarding fees, baths, dips, and flea control in the computer.
- Interpret reference screens within animal and client information screens, and add information to the reference screens when needed.

Client Education

Our goal when a client walks in the door is to WOW them with our friendly, professional service. Constantly be looking for ways to creatively accomplish this goal. The following tasks are the bare minimum in providing good customer service:

- Smile, make direct eye contact, and greet clients and patients in a friendly and professional way, making them feel welcome and comfortable.
- If the pet's temperament allows, you should touch and talk to the pet within 5 seconds of greeting the client. Make every client and pet feel cared for and special.
- Strive during the course of every client interaction to give a sincere complement or say something nice about them or their pet or children.
- Assist clients by holding doors, helping with rambunctious pets or children, and carrying things when needed.
- Assist clients with unruly or unrestrained pets. Ensure that all dogs are leashed and that cats and smaller pets are caged. Isolate aggressive pets. Request assistance as needed.
- Educate clients about common problems such as fleas, heartworm tests and preventatives, fecal tests and parasites, impacted anal glands, feline leukemia testing and prevention, and common behavior problems such as house training, chewing, etc.
- Explain vaccinations, wellness care, and spay/neuter/declaw recommendations.
- Become reasonably familiar with dog and cat breeds and coat colors.
- Be able to communicate and enforce the hospital's payment policies.
- Give price quotes for boarding, daycare, and hospital services by explaining the services contained in standard estimates and educating the client about the value of following the recommendations.
- Listen actively and convey concern, empathy, and compassion to clients.
- Give progress reports on boarding or bathing pets
- Conduct tours of the practice and/or kennel. Before each tour, ensure that the facility is orderly and that staff and pets are prepared for tours.
- Know how to access and navigate the Internet to find veterinary or boarding related websites and access information for clients. (Internet use should be limited to valid professional purposes only during work hours)
- Be familiar with the practice's website and direct clients there for more information on relevant topics or to download forms and estimates
- Be patient, polite, and compassionate with a client who is emotional or discourteous.
- Be familiar with responses for client complaints or comments regarding their bill or their service. Immediately remove loudly complaining or angry clients to a private area where they may speak with a supervisor or doctor. Our goal is to listen, communicate, and make the client happy.
- Recognize the limits of your knowledge. If you are not absolutely confident that you know the answer to a client's question, do not answer it. Ask another staff member for help.

Telephone Skills

- Answer the telephone as needed in a courteous and friendly manner.
- Phones should be answered "Blue Springs Animal Hospital & Pet Resort. This is _____, how may I help you?"
- If a call must be placed on hold, ask for the caller's permission: "Can you hold, please?"
- Callers should not be left on hold without checking back with them for more than 2 minutes. The phone will start to beep after the caller has been on hold for 1 minute.
- Smile while answering and talking on the phone to enhance the friendly quality of your voice.
- Use the caller and pet's name in conversations to personalize the interaction
- Learn and be able to efficiently use the telephone system features such as hold, paging, and voice mail.
- Become familiar with hospital and pet resort policies, prices, and health requirements in order to convey value when communicating fee estimates to clients or potential clients
- Politely ask the client if they would like to schedule an appointment/reservation after giving a fee estimate. Schedule appointments for the hospital and pet resort boarding and grooming
- Be able to recognize if a caller has an emergency situation and respond appropriately. If in doubt, ask. Real emergencies should be directed to come to the hospital immediately. Non-emergencies should be scheduled an appointment as soon as possible.

Hospital and Bathing Admissions and Discharges

- Know and be able to communicate the health requirements for pets to be admitted to the Hospital or Pet Resort. Admitting patients should include an assessment of any services the patient may need (such as vaccinations, or a dental while boarding) and recommendations of such to the client.
- Ensure that all admission paperwork such as drop off forms have been completed. Note and follow through on any special instructions given by the client.

- During and admission recognize symptoms of a critical illness or condition that needs immediate treatment and inform a doctor or technician immediately.
- Recognize patients with contagious or potentially contagious diseases (coughing dogs, sneezing cats, puppies with bad diarrhea) and follow isolation procedures including escorting them immediately to an exam room and having them examined by a doctor prior to admitting them to the hospital or pet resort areas where they may have contact with other pets.
- Take custody of pets from clients. Restrain dogs with the practice's leashes and return the client's leash to the client. Label and properly store food, toys or other belongs staying with the pet.
- Process paperwork and admit pets for drop off appointments or bathing according to standard procedures. Make sure every pet is identified and is written on the treatment board.
- Prepare patients for discharge. Prior to discharge, remove patients' catheters and make sure they are dry, clean, and free of body fluids, excrement, or odors.
- If the patient has Discharge Instructions or an Exam Checklist, present this to the client and answer questions if you know the answers. Request assistance if you need further information.
- Make sure pets go home with all medications, products, and personal items
- Sincerely thank clients and tell them we look forward to seeing them again next time.

Employees are expected to act in the best interest of the hospital, even if doing so requires actions or responsibilities not specifically listed in the job description.

The job description is subject to addition, subtraction, or revision by management as needed.

Worker Status for Payroll Over Time Considerations: Non-Exempt

I have read and understand the qualifications and requirements for the job I am accepting at Blue Springs Animal Hospital and Pet Resort. By signing below I testify that I have the educational qualifications and can perform the physical tasks described in the job description. Furthermore, I believe that I have the knowledge, experience, and aptitude to learn and proficiently perform every task listed in the job description.

I understand that the signing of this job description does not in any way create or constitute an employment contract or change my "at will" employment status under Missouri laws.

Date: _____ Employee Signature: _____