



SPCA[®]



**Orientation &
Training Pack**

Health and Safety Handbook

Table of Contents

WELCOME TO ROTORUA SPCA	4
Introduction	5
Policies, protocols and training documents	6
Disciplinary procedure	6
ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID	7
TETANUS	7
MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND PRE-EXISTING INJURIES	8
Allergies	8
HAZARDS	9
Mould	9
Slippery floors and trip hazards	10
Using ladders	10
Cleaning chemicals and other hazardous substances	11
Manual handling	12
INFECTIOUS DISEASE MANAGEMENT	13
Limiting the spread of infectious disease	13
ZOONOTIC DISEASE	15
Overview	15
Common zoonotic diseases	15
Salmonellosis	15
Ringworm	16
Toxoplasmosis	16
Cat-Scratch Fever	16
Giardiasis	17
Leptospirosis	17
Campylobacteriosis	17
Animal bites	17
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT	18
DRESS CODE	18
WORKING OUTSIDE	19
In hot, sunny weather	19
In windy weather	19
In cold, wet weather	19
SAFE ANIMAL HANDLING	20
General guidelines when handling an animal	20
Reading an animal's body language	21

Dog fights	21
Cat fights	21
After a dog or cat fight	21
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	22
General info.....	22
Hallways and emergency exits	22
Earthquakes.....	22
Fire.....	23
Bomb threats.....	23
COMPUTERS AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT	24
STRESS	25
COMPASSION FATIGUE	25
PERSONAL SAFETY IN RESPONSE TO AGGRESSION	26
NO SMOKING POLICY	26
PROCESSING DONATED ITEMS	27
Sorting goods.....	27
Discarding goods	27
RETAIL AREAS	28
Shoplifting	28
Armed holdup.....	28
Stacking shelves.....	29
WORKING ALONE AFTER HOURS	29
FOSTERING	30
FURTHER INFORMATION	31

Photographs courtesy of Jo Moore Photographer, Wellington SPCA and
 Auckland SPCA

Welcome to Rotorua SPCA

As a member of the Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RNZSPCA), we are the fifth largest SPCA in New Zealand. Each year, we care for over 2,000 animals, among them lost, abandoned, injured, stray, ill-treated, wild and unwanted individuals.

Our mission is to promote the humane treatment of animals and to prevent cruelty to animals.

We do this by rescuing animals in distress, caring for homeless animals, reuniting lost animals with their owners, rehoming orphaned and unwanted animals, running desexing programmes so unwanted animals are not born into a life of suffering, educating children and adults about how to care for animals, investigating complaints of animal welfare and neglect and prosecuting offenders under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. We also run 2 op shops, which help to generate revenue for the SPCA. We never turn away an animal in need of help and we operate a no "time limit" policy for all the animals we have available for adoption.

Our staff and volunteers are integral to ensuring all of this happens. As a registered charity, we receive no direct government funding and rely on the generous assistance of volunteers, without whom we could not operate our vital services. Every year, our volunteers kindly donate their time to support us and our animals.



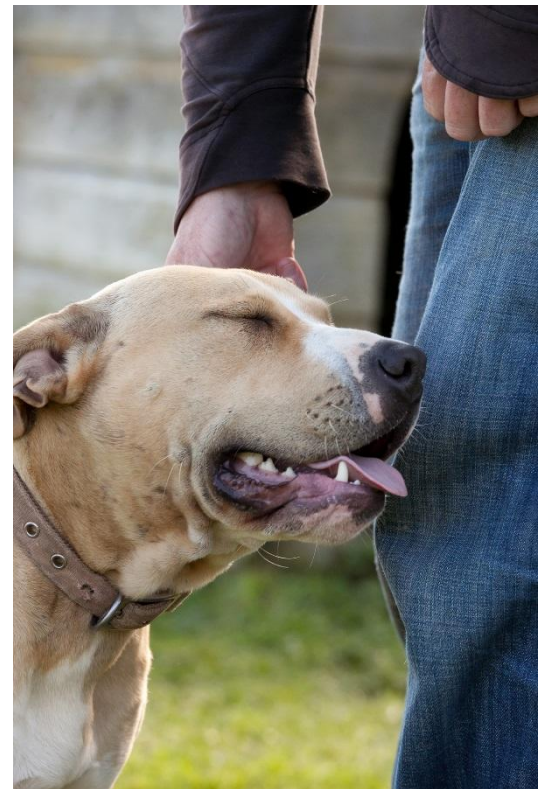
Introduction

The SPCA is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for employees, volunteers, contractors, customers and visitors. This handbook is designed to help you take appropriate measures to ensure your own health and safety and that of others around you.

The information in this handbook is general, and there may be additional hazards encountered in your work area that are not covered in this handbook (note: a hazard is a danger or risk; it is a situation that can cause injury or harm). The hazards outlined here can cause injury or illness. You must take note of the information provided, follow procedures and instructions and wear any safety clothing or equipment where stated.

SOME BASICS

- Always wear appropriate shoes when carrying out your duties.
- Follow safe work practices. Do not take unnecessary risks.
- Never operate or make adjustments to any equipment without authorisation from your supervisor.
- An appropriate standard of hygiene must be observed at all times.
- If you have an accident or injury, take immediate steps to ensure you are safe and attend to any injury. Make sure you report the accident, injury or near miss using the [Accident Reporting and Investigation form](#) (henceforth, "Accident form").
- If you notice something that could be hazardous, you must report it immediately using the [Hazard Report Management form](#) (henceforth, "Hazard form").



IMPORTANT:

Ask for advice and instructions regarding possible hazards in your work area that may not be mentioned in this handbook or ask at any time if you need further information about anything outlined below.

Protocols and training documents

All staff and volunteers are required to comply with all of the society's policies and protocols. For your personal safety, the safety of your colleagues and the safety of our animals, it is imperative that health and safety protocols be followed.

Health & Safety legislation requires us to demonstrate that our staff and volunteers have been trained in health and safety practices.

All staff and volunteers must complete a brief quiz based on the content of this handbook to demonstrate understanding of these practices

Hard copies of this Health and Safety handbook will be available in designated areas on-site, should you need to refer to it. Your supervisor will advise you of any changes to this document. Staff and volunteers will be expected to complete refresher training as required. If you have a question or concern that isn't covered in the training manual, please speak to your supervisor.

Disciplinary procedure

We take health and safety seriously. As a staff member or volunteer, you have two responsibilities:

1. To act as a trained person (e.g. wear personal protective equipment where required)
2. To take reasonable care of yourself and others. If you do anything to compromise the health and safety of yourself, others and/or the animals at the centre, the situation will be investigated. Failure to comply with health and safety regulations may result in dismissal.



Accidents and First Aid

If you have an accident, follow these simple rules:

1. Seek assistance for first aid. There are first aid kits located throughout the centre and trained first-aiders on-site. Your supervisor will point out the location of the kits.
2. When working with animals, it is very important that all cuts are covered and that animal bites are promptly and thoroughly cleaned.
3. Report the accident or near miss to your supervisor as soon as possible.
4. An Accident form must be completed for any accident or near miss. Accident forms can be obtained from your supervisor or found next to the first aid kit.



IMPORTANT:

If you have an accident or near miss, you must report it to your manager and complete an Accident form.

Tetanus

One of our most common hazards is from people cutting themselves on cans/tins. This can happen at the animal centres and also the Op Shops.

IMPORTANT:

Even if you are not handling animals, it is strongly recommended that you have had a tetanus injection within the last ten years.

Medical conditions and pre-existing injuries

Many of our roles are physical, involving heavy lifting, manual handling and cleaning. If you have a medical condition or injury that may affect your ability to safely perform the tasks assigned to you, you must inform your supervisor immediately. We will work with you to determine the best role possible.

If you are injured or are recovering from an injury, we may require a medical certificate indicating that it is safe for you to perform heavy lifting and other manual handling prior to allowing you onto a shift.

Allergies

Some people are allergic to animals or more particularly the dander or dust off the coats of cats, dogs and birds. Symptoms for mild allergies include itchy eyes and/or nose and sneezing. Symptoms of a severe allergic reaction include difficulty breathing, constriction of the airways, the development of hives, and the swelling of lips, tongue or throat. Avoidance of the allergen is the best strategy.

If you have an allergy that may impact on your capacity to carry out a role, you must inform your supervisor as soon as possible. We will endeavour to relocate you to a different area where allergen exposure may be reduced. If your allergies pose a significant risk to your health and safety or if they prevent you from carrying out your daily tasks, then you may need to reconsider your role with the SPCA.

For a severe allergic reaction:

1. Call emergency services 111
2. Administer epinephrine auto-injector (e.g. EpiPen), if available.



Hazards

A hazard is a danger or risk; it is a situation that can cause injury or harm. There are a number of potential hazards within each of our locations that can cause you injury or illness. Make sure you read and understand the Hazard Register for the area in which you will be working. Hazard Registers are displayed on the wall. For your own safety, and for the safety of our animals, please:

- Follow all instructions
- Report any hazards or potential hazards immediately by filling out a Hazard form
- Report all accidents or near miss accidents to your supervisor and fill in an Accident form
- Use all safety equipment provided (including gloves, gowns and disposable face masks)
- Familiarize yourself with the location of fire alarms, emergency exits, wet floor signs, first aid kits and other emergency equipment in the area in which you will be working
- Ensure you are working safely
- Take care of yourself and others working in your area



Mould

When receiving donated goods, you may encounter mould. Symptoms of mould exposure include:

- Nasal stuffiness
- Eye irritation
- Wheezing
- Skin irritation

If a donated bag or box smells strongly of mould, dispose of the whole box or bag without sorting through it. Visibly mouldy donations should also be discarded. Gloves and face masks will be provided for your safety, to be used as and when required

Slippery floors and trip hazards

- Floors may be slippery if they have been recently washed, if a drink has been spilled, if water has been tracked in from outside, or from animal “accidents”. Take care on all surfaces
- For the safety of others, clean up spills and accidents immediately and place a wet floor sign down when appropriate
- Walk slowly on wet floors, and warn others you see about the danger
- Closed-toed, sturdy shoes with rubber soles to help reduce slips and trips must be worn in all locations
- Do not run inside any of our buildings
- Trip hazards can commonly occur, so you need to be watchful for these at all times to protect yourself and others. Where possible, a clear floor policy applies. Keep floors clear from trip hazards; ensure any items on the floor are highly visible and are not jutting out from under shelves. If possible, remove the item from the floor. This will include stock on the floor that is



Cleaning chemicals and other hazardous substances

Chemicals used for cleaning and disinfecting are present on-site. You may be asked to prepare these solutions. You will be advised on correct use and handling. These chemicals are strong and can cause injury if they are splashed onto skin or in the eyes, inhaled, or accidentally swallowed. Do not use these chemicals unless you have been trained and always use personal protective equipment (PPE).

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each chemical is available in the area in which the chemical is stored. Specific instructions on what to do in the event of skin contact, inhalation or ingestion can be found in these documents under the heading “First Aid”. It is highly recommended that anyone working with these chemicals familiarize themselves with these instructions.

Using ladders

Check with your supervisor before using a ladder. General guidelines are outlined below:

- Never use a ladder with missing, broken or loose parts
- Use a ladder with slip-resistant feet
- Never work higher than three steps down from the top of a straight ladder or two steps down from the top of a step ladder
- Ensure the ladder is secure and on solid, level ground.
- Keep three points of contact on the ladder at all times – two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand while climbing, and two feet and one hand when working
- If you must use two hands when working, then use another part of the body (such as thighs, torso or shoulder) as the third point of contact to brace against the ladder or adjacent structure
- Never carry heavy or unstable items up the ladder
- Ladders or stepladders must only be used for light work of short duration (i.e., minutes rather than hours)

General guidelines for handling chemicals are outlined below:

- Preparation of some solutions requires the use of personal protective equipment (e.g. disposable gloves, goggles and protective clothing). Your supervisor will show you what is required
- Never touch your face or your mouth while handling chemicals
- Wash hands thoroughly after handling chemicals
- If a chemical splashes onto your skin, wash thoroughly in running water
- If a chemical splashes in your eye, flush the eye with cold water using an eye wash kit or at an eye wash station, if available
- If you accidentally swallow a chemical, get help from a supervisor or staff member immediately. Refer to the MSDS for appropriate action
- If there are any concerns, seek medical attention immediately
- If you spill a chemical, clean it up immediately. Ask for help if necessary. Inform your supervisor that a spill occurred, even if you have cleaned it up. More information is available on the product MSDS
- Your supervisor will instruct you on how to safely dispose of leftover chemicals. This information can also be found on the product MSDS

Manual handling

You may be asked to lift or carry a heavy or bulky item, such as a bag of food, cat litter, a heavy animal or heavy bags of donated goods.

IMPORTANT:

Do not risk being injured or injuring an animal

**If you do not feel confident handling an animal or a heavy object,
do not attempt to do so**

**If the load is too heavy, large or awkward to lift alone, ask for help
in moving it or use the trolleys provided**

Lifting objects correctly:

1. Ensure you are standing on a firm, non-slippery surface
2. Place your feet apart (shoulder width), to form a stable base
3. Keep the load as close to your body as possible
4. Remember to keep your back straight and upright
5. Lift with your legs, by bending at the knees
6. Try to keep your centre of gravity above your feet and the object close to your body
7. Lower an item using the same techniques



If you think you have sustained an injury:

- Notify your supervisor as soon as possible; the earlier the injury is treated, the faster the recovery time.
- Fill out an Accident form. This is important, not only for our records, but also because ACC will require a record of the accident before accepting a claim.

Infectious disease management

One of the big problems facing animal centres is the spread of infectious diseases amongst the animals. This is due to a number of factors:

- The density of animals
- The high number of young animals that are more at risk to infectious disease
- Many incoming animals carrying infectious disease
- The ability of these diseases to spread very quickly
- The amount of people handling each animal
- Stress, which makes the animals more susceptible to disease

Diseases are spread due to animals mixing together, people transferring the infectious agents, the agents spreading themselves through the air, or on physical items such as food bowls or bedding. Pets at home could be at risk as well.

IMPORTANT:

**Please ensure your pets are up to date with their vaccinations.
We recommend you change your clothes before handling your own
pets.**

Limiting the spread of infectious disease

Most infectious diseases are caused by agents that are very easily transmitted between animals and by the people handling them. We have strict requirements that need to be followed to ensure that diseases are not spread. You will be taught these as part of your training in each of the areas.



Please follow these simple guidelines to reduce the chance of contracting or spreading a contagious disease:

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after handling any animal or animal waste, and before moving from one area to another
- Use the personal protective equipment as required in each of the areas
- Report any sick animals to your supervisor before you handle them
- Follow instructions shown on cages throughout the centre
- If you deal with any animals in the contagious areas, do not handle any healthy animals afterward
- After working in one area, do not go into other areas and handle the animals
- Always follow the directions regarding the use of disinfectants when cleaning cages
- Special care and time must be taken to ensure even the hardest to reach areas of cages are disinfected
- If any of your pets are sick at home, or you have been in contact with sick animals, you must report this to the relevant supervisor before your shift starts
- If you are pregnant or if you are on any medication that suppresses your immune system, or if you are suffering from any immune-suppressive disease, seek advice from your medical practitioner before working at the centre
- If scratched or bitten by an animal, clean the wound thoroughly and report to a staff member or your supervisor immediately. Bite wounds are prone to infection, so if this injury is sustained, seek medical attention
- Change out of your work clothes immediately when you go home
- Do not eat in any of the animal areas
- Do not allow dogs to lick your mouth



Zoonotic Disease

Overview

A zoonotic disease is a disease that can be transmitted from an animal to a human. Animals in the centres may carry such diseases and working in such close proximity increases your exposure. Risks are low, but it is important to be aware of them. We have procedures in place to reduce the spread of zoonotic diseases and minimize the risk of contracting one. Please be aware that there are many illnesses that, while not transmissible to humans, can be transmitted to other animals in the centre. To reduce the risk of spreading or contracting disease, please follow the guidelines outlined above under the heading, “Limiting the spread of infectious disease”.

IMPORTANT:

If you have any health concerns, talk to your supervisor or a medical practitioner as soon as possible.

Should you be sick or concerned about a possible zoonotic disease, seek medical attention promptly.

Common zoonotic diseases

There are many different zoonotic diseases, but the ones most relevant to us are outlined below. Most of these incidents are rare.

Salmonellosis

Salmonella is a bacterium that causes gastro-enteritis. Many animals can pass the bacteria in their faeces. Humans can become infected by ingesting the bacteria (e.g. consuming food or water contaminated with *Salmonella* or by not practicing strict personal hygiene after contact with faeces). Symptoms usually occur within a day or so of infection and include diarrhoea, nausea, fever, chills and abdominal pains. Meningitis may also develop if *Salmonella* enters the central nervous system. If you have any of the above symptoms, you must seek medical attention immediately and inform your supervisor.



Ringworm

Ringworm is not a worm, but a fungal skin infection that can be caught from direct contact with infected animals, infected spores on hair that has been shed, or bedding. Although this infection causes little distress and is not an emergency, it is highly contagious to all animals and people. In animals, ringworm can cause irregularly shaped spots of fur loss often starting on the face, ears and paws; however, some animals show no signs of infection. In humans, symptoms are varied, but may include: a red, often circular lesion on the skin that may be itchy; small bald patches on the scalp; and discoloured, thick, brittle nails. To treat a ringworm infection, you should keep skin clean and dry; avoid clothing that rubs against and irritates the area; wash sheets and nightclothes every day while you are infected; seek help from a general practitioner or pharmacist (the infection is easily resolved with an anti-fungal cream); and keep any lesions on hands or arms covered to minimise cross infection (e.g. protective gloves). If you think you have ringworm, you must inform your supervisor immediately so that an action plan can be put in place. If you are working in an animal area, we may need to relocate you and assign you alternative non-animal tasks until the infection resolves. In some cases you may not be able to continue to work on site until you are clear of the infection.

Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasma is a microscopic parasite that can affect humans as well as animals. The most common form of transmission is consuming undercooked, contaminated meat; however, it can also be present in the faeces of infected cats. The use of gloves when cleaning litter trays will reduce the risk of transmission. Symptoms in humans are similar to the flu: fever, fatigue, headaches and sore throat. Infection in pregnant women can pose significant risk to the foetus (e.g. spontaneous abortions or birth defects). **If you are pregnant or thinking of getting pregnant, please talk to a medical practitioner before working at the centre.**

Cat-Scratch Fever

This is a bacterial disease carried by cats, most likely kittens under a year old with fleas. It is transmitted to humans via cat bites or scratches. Cats themselves do not show symptoms of cat scratch fever. Symptoms are a small, pimple-like lesion at the bite/scratch site, fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, swollen lymph nodes, and headache. If you have any of the above symptoms, you must seek medical attention immediately and inform your supervisor.



Giardiarsis

Giardia is a protozoa (a microscopic organism) passed in the faeces of many animals, including cats, dogs, hedgehogs and birds. In humans, it causes vomiting, mild or severe diarrhoea, abdominal pain, and occasional weight loss. Humans can become infected through contact with animal faeces (e.g. contaminated food or water, not practicing strict personal hygiene after cleaning up animal faeces). If you have Giardiarsis symptoms, you must seek medical attention immediately and inform your supervisor.

Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease predominantly carried by cattle in New Zealand, but it can also be carried by dogs and hedgehogs. It is contracted by consuming contaminated food or water or by coming into close contact with an infected animal's urine. Symptoms are prolonged fever, chills, weakness, abdominal or muscle pain, jaundice and anaemia. It is potentially fatal. If you have any of the above symptoms, you must seek medical attention immediately and inform your supervisor.

Campylobacteriosis

Campylobacter is a bacterium that can be found in the faeces of many animals including birds, cats, dogs, pigs, and sheep. It causes gastro-enteritis (vomiting, diarrhoea, and abdominal pain) in humans. Symptoms may take a few days to develop. Infection in humans can be gained by contact with animal faeces.

Animal bites

Bite wounds can damage tissues and introduce bacteria into wounds. Bruising and bleeding may result. Cat mouths in particular are laden with bacteria; these bacteria can be transferred under the skin when a cat bites. If you are bitten by a cat, or if a bite wound from any animal becomes inflamed, it is important that you seek medical attention. Your doctor will probably prescribe a course of antibiotics to resolve any infection.



Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is equipment that is intended to be worn or used to protect you against risks to your health and safety. Examples include face masks, gloves, aprons, and gowns. PPE must be used in accordance with the instructions provided (i.e. when and as required). Your supervisor will ensure that you are trained in how and when to use PPE as relevant to your role.

Ensure that gloves, gowns and goggles are used when mixing or handling concentrated chemicals and when using any product that may have health risks. Use a disposable face mask when spraying a chemical to prevent inhalation.

To prevent the spread of disease, gloves and gowns should also be worn when working with animals that have been diagnosed with a contagious illness.

Leather gloves should be worn when handling fractious or nervous animals that may be prone to bite or scratch.

Suitable foot wear (i.e. closed-toe, flat, non-slip) and clothing should be worn when carrying out duties around the Centre (See “Dress Code” for more information).

Report any lost or defective PPE immediately. Return PPE to its place of storage after use.

DRESS CODE

We recommend wearing clothing that provides reasonable coverage to your skin so as to minimise the exposure to scratches, chemicals and dirt. Due to the risk of dropping heavy objects or chemicals, closed-toe, rubber sole shoes or gumboots must be worn.

Name badges should be worn and prominently displayed at all times (ensure name badges are not concealed by an outer layer of clothing, such as a jacket).

Jewellery (including piercings) should not be worn in the animal centres, as this can be grabbed by inquisitive paws and mouths. Long hair should be tied back when working directly with the animals for the same reason. As tasks can often be quite physical, skirts should not be worn.



Working outside

While most of the facilities are enclosed or sheltered from the sun and rain, there may be some activities where you will be required to work outside.

In hot, sunny weather:

- Wear sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat if possible to prevent over-exposure to ultra-violet rays, which can cause sunburn and put you at risk of developing skin cancer
- Never wear open-toed shoes such as jandals
- Drink water to prevent heat stroke
- Alternate outside work with inside work if possible. Check with your supervisor



In windy weather:

- Wear warm clothing, including a windbreaker jacket, if available.
- Tie long hair back to prevent impaired visibility.
- Ensure that any lightweight equipment is anchored down to prevent it from flying away.

In cold, wet weather:

- Wear warm clothes and waterproof gear. If possible, have a change of clothes with you when working in bad weather.
- Drink warm drinks.
- Alternate working outside with inside where possible. Check with your supervisor.

IMPORTANT:

If weather conditions make it risky to continue working, stop work and take shelter until safe.

Safe animal handling

Knowing how to handle animals safely reduces the risk of injury to both the animal and the animal handler. If relevant to your role, you will be trained in the correct technique for safe handling of dogs, cats and/or small animals.

General guidelines when handling an animal

- Only handle an animal if you have been trained to do so.
- Take your time.
- Avoid over stimulating the animal.
- As a general rule, approach the animal in a quiet but confident manner from the front or side.
- Never sneak up on an animal from behind. Let it know you are there by talking softly.
- Remember that an animal may perceive a threat, even though this is not your intention.
- Pick the animal up in a safe manner suitable to the species.
- Only use equipment that you have been trained to use.
- Never tease or threaten an animal.
- Never interrupt an animal that is eating, sleeping or toileting.
- Be aware of an existing medical condition or injury that may be causing an animal pain or discomfort before attempting to lift or carry it. Points of pain should be kept away from the handler's body.
- Only trained staff or volunteers may restrain an animal during a vet examination. While restraining the animal, keep hands away from teeth and claws.
- Only administer topical/oral medication if you have been trained to do so.
- Only trained staff/volunteers may walk dogs. A detailed Dog Walking Training Guide will be provided to anyone who will be engaging in this activity.

Reading an animal's body language

Before you handle any animal, take a moment to look at the animal's body language. Animals commonly encountered at the SPCA include cats, dogs, rabbits, and guinea pigs. Less frequently, other species may be brought in, including hedgehogs, birds, wildlife and farm animals. The training documents for animal handling will include more detailed information on how to read body language and how to handle these animals safely.

Always exert caution when handling an animal. Even if signs of aggression aren't apparent, an animal may bite if it perceives a threat, if it is over-stimulated, if it is in pain or even accidentally while eating. Personal protective equipment should be used when handling an animal showing signs of fear or aggression. High-stress animals with a high likelihood of causing injury should only be handled by trained staff. Pay close attention to signage placed on the front of the animal's cage and follow any listed instructions carefully.

Dog fights

Your safety is paramount.

It is often difficult to differentiate between natural behaviour and aggressive behaviour. Please always seek guidance from the person on duty and the experienced staff on site. Never put yourself at risk to break up a dog fight. If you witness a dog fight, do not put any part of your body between the dogs.

Cat fights

Again, never put yourself at risk to break up a cat fight. If it is safe to do so, you may hold a towel between the cats so that they cannot see each other. Slowly move the towel in the direction of one cat to encourage it to back away from the other.



After a dog or cat fight:

- Do not go near the animals for at least 15 minutes; the fight instinct may be present for some time afterward.
- Continue to monitor behaviour from outside the enclosure.
- Ensure the employee in charge of the area is notified of the incident as soon as practicable, especially if any animal is injured.

IMPORTANT:

Do not handle animals on your own until you have been trained and supervised by an experienced staff member.

If you do not feel confident handling an animal, do not attempt to do so. Seek assistance from another person. Do not risk being injured or injuring the animal.

Emergency Procedures

General info

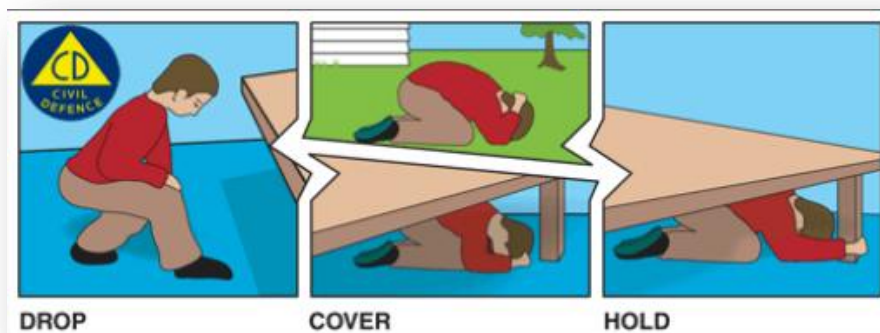
- Familiarise yourself with the location of fire alarms, fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment in the area in which you will be working.
- Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarise staff and volunteers with these procedures and increase the probability of a successful response during an actual emergency.

Hallways and emergency

- All hallways and other areas designated as an emergency escape route are to be kept clear of obstacles at all times.
- Exit doors are not to be locked, blocked or barred during open hours so as to prevent anyone from leaving the building.
- Stairways, passageways and walkways are not to be used as places of storage for any length of time.
- If there is a disabled person in your area who does not have anyone accompanying them, assist with their evacuation where possible. If unable to do so safely, contact your Floor/Area Warden.

Earthquakes

1. In the event of an earthquake, **drop** to the ground.
2. Take **cover** under a sturdy piece of furniture.
3. **Hold** on. Note: Do not hold on to the top of the furniture or anywhere where fingers may be injured by falling objects. Hold on to something sturdy and sheltered, such as a table leg.
4. If a sturdy piece of furniture is unavailable, shelter against an interior wall away from glass (e.g. windows), bookcases, or any other source of falling objects.
5. Once the ground has stopped shaking, emerge from your shelter with caution, staying alert for any hazards, such as objects that may be on the verge of falling.
6. Take note of safe places in the room(s) in which you are working, so that you can respond quickly in the event of an earthquake.



Fire

1. If you discover a fire, raise the alarm immediately by operating the nearest fire alarm.
2. Call the Fire Service 111.
3. Leave the building by the designated escape route, or if blocked then by the next safest escape route.
 - a. Leave your area's lights on. If they are off, please turn them on when exiting. This will assist the Fire Service when entering and searching the building.
 - b. No personal belongings or cups of coffee/tea are permitted to be carried out of the building in the case of a fire evacuation.
4. Assemble at the designated evacuation point.
5. Do not attempt to re-enter the building until the "All Clear" has been given by the Fire Service.
6. Potentially dangerous processes and equipment should be shut down, only if possible to do so safely and without delay.
7. Move quickly. **Do not run.** Remain calm at all times.
8. **Note:** If you need to evacuate the building, do not try and take any animals with you. The firefighters will rescue animals from the centre upon their arrival.

IMPORTANT:

Do not fight a fire if you chance upon it, unless it is small enough for you to do so safely and without any chance of it spreading before you can extinguish it.

Sound the alarm first, and follow the procedure outlined above.

Bomb threats

In the unlikely event of a bomb threat, remain calm and follow the directions below:

- The New Zealand police have issued a bomb threat checklist that can be used to record information if a bomb threat is received (<http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/businesses-and-organisations/suspicious-mail-bomb-threats>).
- Call the Police 111.
- Relay as much information as possible about the threat.
- Follow instructions given by the Police.
- Notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

IMPORTANT:

Treat all threats as genuine.

If a bomb threat is received, it is the responsibility of the employers to decide whether a search or evacuation will be conducted.

Computers and Office equipment

You may be asked to work on computers, performing data entry, writing profiles for our animals up for adoption, or inputting information into our Animal Shelter Database System, Shelter Buddy.

It is just as important to be safety-conscious when working in the office as it is when working with the animals or in the Op Shop. Working with computers for long periods of time without taking regular breaks can cause Occupational Overuse Syndrome, which can affect your hands, wrist, arm, neck or shoulders. It is important that your computer workstation is set up correctly, that your posture is good when sitting at the computer, and that you have the opportunity to take small, regular breaks away from the computer when the workload is heavy. See your supervisor or manager for further information about the correct set up for workstations.



Here are some tips for office safety:

- Always close filing cabinet drawers when not in use: open top drawers can overbalance the unit and people can trip over open bottom drawers, especially if their view is obstructed.
- Handle scissors, guillotines and other sharp equipment carefully to avoid injury.
- If you are sitting behind the counter or at a computer for extended periods, be sure to maintain a healthy posture and take small, regular “standing” breaks.
- If you are using a computer for extended periods, try shifting your focus from the computer screen to a far wall regularly in order to avoid straining your eyes.
- Be careful when changing cartridges in printers and photocopiers: avoid hot metal areas and do not expose yourself to any inks or powders. Wash your hands after changing a cartridge.

Stress

Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon them. We will take all practicable steps to prevent unreasonable workplace stress and to support you in managing the demands of the workplace. If you are feeling stressed, please talk with your supervisor.

Compassion fatigue

Sometimes people who work or volunteer for charitable organisations, like SPCA, can be at risk of developing compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue is defined as “fatigue, emotional distress, or apathy resulting from the constant demands of caring for others”. This can mean that we become unable to feel empathy for those we are trying to help. The lack of empathy can also extend to co-workers, family and friends. Symptoms of compassion fatigue are different for everyone and can commonly include some or all of the symptoms mentioned in the box, below. Prevention of compassion fatigue is the preferred approach. Prevention strategies can include simple things like making sure you have a laugh at work every day, taking your breaks, talking with others in the workplace about the tough stuff, and making it a priority to be supportive and kind to each other in the workplace. At home it is important to make sure you regularly do things that are fun and rewarding, preferably things that don’t involve caring for others. Prioritise things you enjoy at least some of the time. We want all employees and volunteers to have awareness of compassion fatigue. We will pro-actively support any concerns relating to compassion fatigue to help employees and volunteers understand, prevent and if necessary manage this condition. If you are experiencing or think you might be experiencing compassion fatigue, talk about it with your supervisor or health & safety representative. It is our policy to help you get support.



Compassion fatigue symptoms

- Exhaustion
- Reduced ability to feel sympathy and empathy
- Anger and irritability
- Increased use of alcohol and other drugs
- Dread of working with certain clients/patients
- Diminished sense of enjoyment of working or volunteering
- High anxiety or irrational fears
- Intrusive imagery or blanking out
- Hypersensitivity or insensitivity
- Difficulty separating work life from personal life
- Missing work or you shifts, taking many sick days
- Impaired ability to make decisions and care for clients/patients
- Problems in personal relationships

Personal safety in response to aggression

Aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated at the animal centres or Op Shops. Everyone must contribute toward preventing aggression by maintaining a professional and customer-focussed approach while carrying out duties at the SPCA.

If someone behaves toward you in any way that makes you feel unsafe or threatened, always prioritise your own safety and the safety of other customers, visitors, volunteers and employees (including contractors). Do not put yourself or others at risk.

Remain calm and polite. Withdraw from the situation as soon as possible and report the incident to your supervisor or manager immediately. You must report incidents of aggression using the Accident form and you should do this as soon as possible after the incident has occurred.

If you feel you need extra support after an incident, please talk to your supervisor.

No smoking policy

We provide a smoke-free workplace. This includes electronic cigarettes. To contribute to the health and well-being of all employees, volunteers, contractors, visitors and customers and to comply with relevant New Zealand law, all SPCA workplaces are entirely smoke-free. Smoking in any other area, including walking to and from an off-site area, and in any SPCA vehicle (owned, rented or leased) is prohibited.

If you are a smoker, please ask to be shown the designated smoking area(s) and restrict your smoking to scheduled break times only. Smokers and users of tobacco products must dispose of the remains safely (i.e., not in general rubbish bins as this creates potential for causing fires). This helps to keep a neat and clean environment.

If you choose to smoke in your personal vehicle and it is parked on SPCA grounds, we ask that you ensure that the smoke and tobacco products are completely contained within the vehicle so that others are not affected by your smoking.

We also ask that you be mindful that as an employee or volunteer, you are representing the SPCA and that you take every care to ensure that you do not smell of tobacco smoke when working with customers and donors, as many find that odour offensive.

If you wish to seek assistance to stop smoking, contact The Quit Group, which provides quit smoking programmes including the national free telephone support Quitline: <http://www.quit.org.nz>
Telephone: 0800 778 778.

Processing donated items

When working with donated goods, it is very important that you take care when emptying bags and boxes. Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, and use correct manual handling procedures.



- Use safe manual handling practices (see section above)
- If items are too big or it is obvious that they are too damaged, politely thank the donor, but decline the goods, citing reasons.
- Take extra care with packages that may contain fragile or breakable goods.
- Place the donations in a place where they will not pose a fire or trip hazard. Do not place donations where they will block foot traffic.
- Seek assistance from your supervisor if required

Sorting goods

- Use safe manual handling practices.
- Use caution when unloading containers of donated goods. Glassware and other fragile/breakable items are frequently donated. These items may break in transit or while the bags are being handled in the shop.
- Open boxes or bags carefully so you can see what is inside.
- Never put your bare hand into a container with unknown contents.
- If you cannot clearly see the contents of the container, wear leather safety gloves to remove items.
- If a strong mouldy odour is present, discard the whole box or bag without sorting through it.
- If you sustain an injury while unloading donated goods, seek First Aid. Inform your supervisor of the injury as soon as possible and complete an Accident Form.

Discarding goods

- Broken items can be dangerous. When discarding these items, wear appropriate PPE and ensure you do not handle the item any more than is necessary.
- Broken glassware should be wrapped in newspaper prior to disposal, so as not to injure anyone who may be handling the rubbish.
- Dispose of the glassware as soon as possible. If it is not possible to dispose of the glassware immediately, clearly label the wrapped glassware as "Broken Glass" and place in an area where it is unlikely to be accidentally handled.

Retail

Shoplifting

Good customer service helps to prevent shoplifting and contributes to a safe environment. Engaging customers in conversation is a great deterrent for shoplifting. Greet every customer warmly and if you are working in the retail area, regularly ask people who are browsing if they need help finding anything.

Maintaining a constant presence on the floor will also deter shoplifters. While merchandising or cleaning in the retail area, remain aware of the people around you.

If you observe someone shoplifting:

- Advise your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Complete the Accident form, located near your First Aid Kit.
- Try to remember as many details as possible about the offender.
- Do not chase after the offender or attempt to retrieve the stolen goods.

IMPORTANT:

Do not approach anyone you have observed shoplifting.

Always prioritise your own safety.

Your safety is more important than a retail item!

Armed holdup

In the event of an armed holdup, your number one priority must be your own safety and the safety of others.

Do:

- Cooperate with the offender's demands.
- Answer the offender's demands.
- Stay calm.
- Keep your hands in the offender's sight.

Don't:

- Don't argue with the offender.
- Don't stare at the offender.
- Don't fight with the offender.
- Don't chase after the offender.
- Don't attempt to retrieve stolen goods or money.

Immediately after the holdup:

- Lock all doors and call 111.
- Ensure everyone present is ok.
- Keep everyone calm until police arrive.
- Do not touch anything that could be used as evidence.
- Write down all of the details you can remember about the offender and give this information to the police.

As soon as possible after the holdup:

- Complete the Accident form, located near your First Aid kit.
- Ensure that your supervisor and the CEO have been informed of the holdup.

An armed holdup can be a traumatic experience. Immediately after the event, you will be offered support. In the days and weeks after the holdup, ensure that you let your supervisor know if you need more support.

Stacking shelves

Items piled precariously on top of shelves present a serious hazard in an earthquake. Heavy or sharp items should never be placed atop shelves.

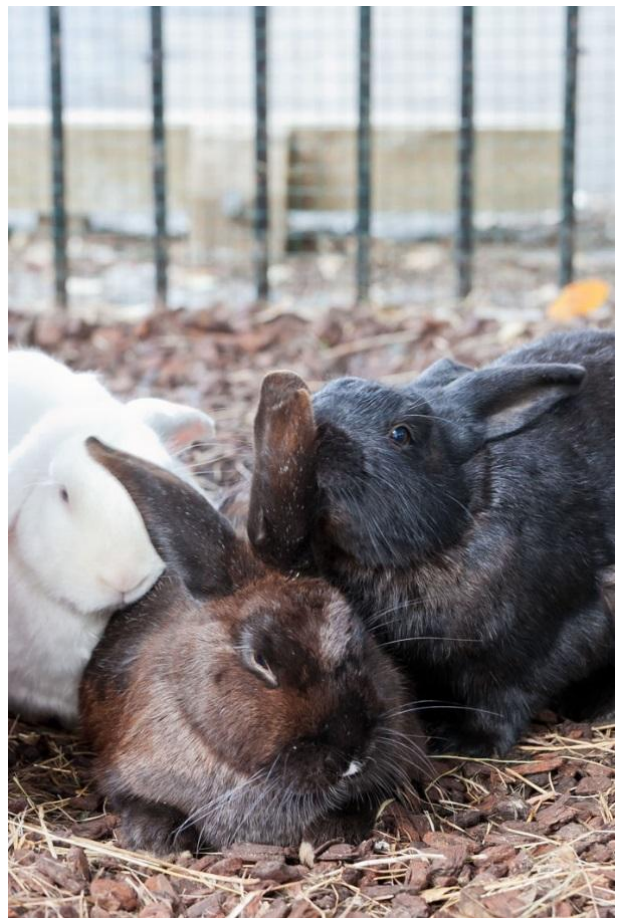
- Do not pile up stock as it could become unstable and fall on customers.
 - Never place anything on top of a shelf that could cause serious injury if airborne.
 - If there is limited space to store the items safely, ask your supervisor for assistance.
-

Working alone after hours

Ideally, no one should be in the building alone outside of normal working hours. Wherever possible, take steps to ensure that you are not alone. If you need to stay after closing time, a colleague must stay with you.

If you are unavoidably on the premises alone outside of normal working hours, take precautions to ensure your safety. For example:

- Ensure that all doors and windows are secure so that no one can enter the centre.
- If possible, prior to being on your own, move your car to a public area to avoid risk when you are leaving the centre.
- Do not open the door to allow members of the public to enter the centre, regardless of whether they are known to you.
- Contact your supervisor to advise that you are in the centre alone outside of normal working hours and re-contact your supervisor to inform them when you are leaving the centre.



FOSTERING

Although hazards will vary in each individual home, there are some general hazards to be aware of when fostering animals. It is the responsibility of the fosterer to identify and manage hazards present in the home in order to provide a safe environment for the foster animals.

Training manuals are available for the animals that you will be fostering. Please take the time to read these. Here are some general health and safety guidelines for fosterers.



- Fosterers will need to be familiarized with safe animal handling techniques relevant to the species they will be fostering.
- If you are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant when fostering, please talk to us before you accept any foster animals.
- Don't mix any sick foster animals with your own animals and vice versa.
- Never let your own animals meet your foster animals unsupervised.
- Always supervise children and foster animals.
- Wash your hands before and after handling your foster animals, and before eating.
- Use disposable gloves when changing litter trays, washing food/water trays and cleaning up faeces, urine or vomit.
- Do not deviate from the recommended diet; some foods, like chocolate and grapes, are toxic to dogs and cats.
- Please ensure that your vehicle is in warrantable condition so that trips to and from the vet can be made safely.
- When travelling to and from the vet, please ensure that your foster animal is secure in the vehicle.
- Familiarise yourself with your foster animal's normal health, as this will make it easier to recognise abnormalities.
- If there are any windows in the room in which the animals will be kept, you will need to ensure that these are secured so that the foster animals are unable to escape. Kittens and puppies in particular will not be desexed, fully vaccinated or microchipped, so it is important that they remain confined.
- Be wary of any tight spaces or openings that a kitten may attempt to climb into (e.g. front loading washing machines, dish washers, toilets). Make these openings inaccessible if possible and closely supervise the kittens while they are in the vicinity of these hazards.
- Remove any plants from the room in which the foster animals will be housed, as many plant species are toxic to dogs and cats.
- Be careful with any cords or exposed wires, as these can be chewed.
- Consider getting a Pet Emergency Sticker that will alert emergency services that you have animals inside your home in the event of an emergency.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask your supervisor, your local health and safety representative, or a member of the Volunteer Team.

Thank you for all your support



Contact Details

Rotorua SPCA

24 Old Taupo Road

Mangakakahi, Rotorua

07 349 2955

education@rotoruaspca.org.nz

<https://www.facebook.com/spcarotorua>