



Veterinary - Outreach

Job Title:	Freedom Team Leader
Reporting to:	Freedom Regional Manager
Responsible for:	Up to 2 Freedom Caseworkers
Dogs Trust Grade:	E
Location:	Home-based with travel across the region

Job Purpose

The Freedom Team Leader will be responsible for the day to day running of Freedom, a specialist pet fostering service for people finding freedom from domestic abuse. They oversee the day to day running of the service, including all dog referrals and placements, as well as recruiting and supporting a pool of volunteer foster carer and line management of Freedom Caseworkers. There is also an amount of stakeholder liaison with other agencies, including referrals agencies, animal welfare/fostering organisations and vets. A large part of this role involves driving and/or transporting dogs in a small van across their region.

Overview of the Department/Team

Dogs Trust is the UK's largest dog welfare charity with a network of 21 rehoming centres in the UK and fostering schemes. Dogs Trust believes every dog deserves to live life to the full.

The Outreach team run several services supporting pet owners who are homeless or in housing crisis in the UK, this includes Freedom, a pet fostering service for people finding freedom from domestic abuse. However, most of our referrals come from women fleeing domestic abuse via women-only services. The service places dogs into volunteer foster homes on a temporary basis until their owners are able to be reunited with them. Freedom runs in Greater London and the South East, Yorkshire, the North East, the North West, East Anglia, the Midlands, Scotland and Wales.

Key areas of accountability

Manage the referral and placement process, including:

- assessing dogs referred to the project and matching where appropriate with volunteer foster carers, ensuring suitability and health and safety at all times.
- monitor all ongoing foster placements, ensuring the safety and welfare of foster dogs and volunteers at all times.
- escalate any concerns to the Freedom Regional Manager or UK Freedom Manager.
- liaise where necessary with private boarding establishments regarding temporary boarding arrangements.
- arrange rehoming of foster dogs in liaison with our Regional and Behaviour teams.
- maintain a positive and collaborative working relationship with our Rehoming Centre teams.

With support from the Freedom Management team, promote our service offer to clients/pet owners and referral organisations such as refuges, abuse support services and the police.

<p>Working alongside the Freedom Management team, establish effective networking relationships in this area to raise the profile of the service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend stakeholder events and conduct presentations about the service. • Work with other UK wide pet fostering services where necessary to support pet owners contacting the service. • Attend and represent the service as needed at Links Group pet fostering meetings and where required take an active role in organising these meetings and completing work actions.
Recruit and line manage the Freedom Caseworkers, including setting objectives, managing performance via regular reviews, annual appraisals and managing personal development.
Manage the stock levels for all equipment/uniform for staff and stationery.
Ensure the Freedom vehicles are maintained and serviced regularly in liaison with the Facilities Dept and Dogs Trust policy.
<p>Recruit and manage a pool of suitable volunteer foster carers by following and managing our set recruitment process and ensuring volunteers are made aware of and kept up to date regarding service procedures. Ensure that relevant ongoing support and advice is provided during each placement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed into both the national and regional volunteer recruitment and retention strategy. • Confirm a yearly schedule of volunteer recruitment and retention activities/events and organise and attend events to promote the service and to recruit volunteers. • Escalate any volunteer management and placement concerns, including all complaints, to the Freedom Regional Manager.
Ensure veterinary cover is in place for all foster placements and that the health and behaviour needs of all foster dogs are monitored regularly. Work closely with the relevant teams to ensure all treatment and advice is approved, escalating any concerns in a timely manner.
Cover the out of hours mobile phone rota (currently one week in every ten) and deal with any escalated queries outside of this time when required.
Ensure a contact system for clients and their support agency is set up and that regular case reviews are carried out in accordance with agreed policies and procedures. Update owners (clients) on their dog's progress on a regular basis during the foster placement, contacting them immediately in case of any veterinary/behavioural issues. Provide placement updates to the Freedom Regional Manager.
Authorise service invoices as well as managing and authorising team expenses. Working with the Freedom Invoice and Impact Assistant and where needed the Freedom Regional Manager to resolve account queries in a timely manner.
Responsible alongside the Freedom Regional Manager and the Health and Safety team, for ensuring that the team works in a safe environment in line with Dogs Trust's relevant policies.
Provide regular monthly service reports, stats, and case studies to the UK Freedom Manager. As requested, carry out TV, radio or print interviews in support of our key messages and brand. Any other reasonable duties.
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Person Specification

Essential skills, qualifications, experience, and attributes

Significant experience and overall competency in assessing and handling a variety of dogs and breed types in a rescue/rehoming environment.
Proven experience of providing basic dog training and behaviour advice using positive reinforcement with the ability to implement basic dog training and behaviour programmes.
Relevant experience of managing or delivering a busy service/project, to include the line management of staff.
Knowledge and/or experience of managing and recruiting volunteers.
Ability to manage own time/objectives effectively as well as managing a busy service. Must be able to adapt to change.
Demonstrable experience of making quick and sometimes difficult decisions in challenging situations.

Good understanding of how to develop strong working relationships with our volunteers and our key stakeholders.

Experience of dealing with sensitive and challenging situations in a polite and appropriate manner.

I.T literate, able to use Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint) and in-house databases (Salesforce).

A good understanding of domestic abuse and of the problems faced by people fleeing domestic abuse with pets.

A valid driving licence and experience of driving as part of a previous role.

Desirable skills, qualifications, experience, and attributes

Experience of transporting animals as part of a previous role.

Experience of working at a similar level in the animal welfare sector.

Experience of setting up a new project/service successfully.

Experience of working with or on behalf of vulnerable adults/families fleeing domestic abuse.

Experience of dealing with the Press (print, TV and radio).

Additional information

A basic Disclosure & Barring Service Check (DBS) will be required for this role.

Due to the nature of this role, this post is for women only and is exempt under Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010.

While the working hours for this role will typically be 9am to 5pm, the post holder will be required to undertake occasional out of hours working to support the needs of the service.

Last Revised: March 2024

