

# Interested Volunteer

Green text must be updated every time

Purple text should be edited as needed

Hi <INSERT NAME>

Thank you for expressing interest in the Parvo Team! I'm <INSERT NAME>, the Parvo Team Manager. Joining the Parvo Team is a serious commitment with a great deal of responsibility, so I have a lot of information to help you decide if it's the right place for you. You should leave yourself 30-60 minutes to read the entirety of the email including all protocols which have been linked. You may have heard a little bit about what we do already, but in case you're still in the dark, here's a quick summary:

**About:** The Parvo ICU is an isolation unit where we treat dogs with Canine Parvovirus. These dogs are typically the most critical medical cases at our shelter. This illness produces an incredibly low survival rate without treatment (almost zero percent) and typically infects dogs under one year old. It's an absolutely horrible, absolutely curable disease which affords us a unique opportunity to save quite a few dogs! They require treatments twice a day with various medications. We have a survival rate of 80% - 95% and we typically treat more than 400 dogs a year. I won't sugar coat it, it's a very gross disease. You can't have a soft stomach or a faint heart. We will lose dogs to this disease and there will be blood, diarrhea and vomit (and lots of it). But believe me when I say that treating these dogs and watching them survive is the most rewarding experience I've ever had.



You must be at least 18 years of age to join the Parvo Team due to the tremendous hazards (for both the volunteers and the patients) and responsibility involved. All Parvo ICU volunteers must be APA! volunteer and have attended an APA! Orientation.

**There are two sub-teams within the Parvo Team: the Medical Team and the Care Team.**

*\*\*\*There is currently a short wait list for joining the Parvo Medical Team. New trainees will be picked off the list based on previous medical experience and availability. Currently, we most need people with <insert needed shifts>. We could also use volunteers who will be consistently available on the weekends. It may be a few weeks before your training begins, but you can start immediately as an assistant volunteer until we are able to begin your medical training.\*\*\**

**Medical Team:** The medical team will be trained on how to treat symptoms of Parvo. It is preferred but not required that medical team volunteers have previous medical or veterinary experience.

Medical Team volunteers:

- Administer oral, subcutaneous, and intravenous medications and fluids every shift. This involves using large needles to inject medications into dogs.
- Are expected to memorize and understand the purpose, route, dosing, and precautions of the 15 most [common medications](#) used in the Parvo ICU
- Will follow a 6-day [curriculum](#) during training, and learn to give injections starting on day 1. Study up on all required information between training sessions. You will be expected to know the majority of the protocols on the site by the end of your training (within 3 weeks). Your trainer will be going over medications as you go, but you'll also need to study on your own. Flashcards are highly suggested!
- Medical team shifts are at 8:00 am and 7:00 pm, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.
  - We're really flexible with scheduling - your shift time can vary from week to week based on your schedule! You submit your availability for the following week every Friday.
  - Treatments are usually done in teams of 2-4 people
  - Shifts last 2-4 hours
- **While you're training and for the first 6 months upon becoming a trained volunteer you must commit to 2 shifts per week for 6 months at least.** This is due to the time, commitment and effort put forth to train you. Although you'll be considered fully trained after the initial 3 weeks, you will continue to learn and increase your efficiency in treating for another 3-6 months. We also believe that consistent practice is needed to learn how to treat the puppies properly and effectively. We hope you'll stay with us for much longer though, and the majority of our volunteers stay for many years!
- If you drop out before the required 6 months, you will not be allowed back as a medical volunteer. Special circumstances are accepted on a case-by-case basis.
- You must have a flexible schedule during training. We will try our best to fit our schedule as best as we can to yours, and ask that you do the same so that training will be finished in a timely manner.
- Please read all of the [volunteer expectations](#) on our wiki.

Sound overwhelming? It will be at first, but before you know it you'll have a host of new skills and have saved dozens (or hundreds) of puppy lives!



**Care Team:** The care team focuses on keeping the puppies fed, clean, and comfortable and plays an important role in keeping parvo shifts running efficiently. Care Team responsibilities include:

- Hand feeding and syringe feeding puppies
- Recording puppies' intake (what they're eating and drinking) and output (any vomit or diarrhea)
- Changing bedding and cleaning cages to keep the pups clean and comfortable
- Keeping up with laundry throughout the shift
- Bathing dogs when they are ready to leave the Parvo ICU (mornings only)
- Washing dishes
- Keeping the ICU tidy
- Cuddling and comforting puppies
- Care Team Volunteers are required to volunteer for one shift per week for at least three months
- [More expectations if you're interested in this position](#)

You'll have a lot of very personal contact with some very adorable dogs and help keep parvo shifts running smoothly, but without the pressure and responsibility of the medical treatments.



### **Webpages to Bookmark**

**Online Parvo Site** - You must become familiar with this website, and bookmark it if possible. It contains nearly every document & piece of information you will ever need in parvo, in an organized manner.

**Scheduling:** Please be familiar with how scheduling works, how to properly change shifts and how to stay an active volunteer from this provided link. We make the schedule every week based on each volunteer's availability- you do not have to come in the same days each week. You can submit your availability [<enter site here>](#). The schedule will be posted here every Sunday: [<enter site here>](#). Please bookmark/save these links. Be aware of the protocols and consequences of missing a shift.

**Communication:** Upon joining the team, please join our Parvo Team Google group with an email which you check daily. This is where we send each other updates on dogs in the ICU, weekly scheduling requests, and important reminders. You may begin getting up to ten emails a day, but you must check these emails often to be on the team. Please [<request>](#) to be on the team, and I will approve it.



Hopefully that answers your questions! Email me back to let me know:

1. Which team are you interested in?
2. If interested in the medical team, what is your previous medical experience (animals or human)?
3. Are you comfortable and confident around dogs? You will be working with dogs of all sizes in the Parvo ICU and previous experience with dogs is highly recommended for all volunteers.
4. What is your general availability? Will you be available for any **weekday morning** shifts on a regular basis?
5. What is your school or work schedule? (If you are a student, please include your plans over semester breaks. You can still volunteer if you go home during semester breaks but it's helpful for us to know in advance.)
6. What day can you start, starting as soon as Monday of next week?
7. Have you bookmarked the schedule, availability, and wiki links?
8. Can you commit to the 6 month, 2 shift per week requirement if you want to be a medical volunteer? (This is a very strict requirement.) Can you commit to the 3-month, 1 shift per week requirement if you want to be a care team volunteer?
9. If you are interested in the medical team, are you comfortable and confident with algebra? You will be calculating medication doses and rates as a medical volunteer.