



OPERATIONS

Job Title:	Transfer Centre Canine Assistant
Reporting to:	Transfer Centre Assistant Manager
Dogs Trust Grade:	G
Location:	Penrith Transfer Centre

Job Purpose

To work with external stray pounds to bring dogs into Dogs Trust's care and to transport them between the pounds and the Transfer Centre and/or other Dogs Trust Rehoming Centres. To provide the highest levels of care and welfare management to dogs in the Transfer Centre and whilst in transit, working to Dogs Trust's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and health and safety guidelines. To provide support for the Home from Home programme in Penrith and to deliver excellent customer service, where required.

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 Transfer Centre is an integral part of the Operations department and cares for approximately 1,500 dogs per year. The Centre exists to:

- Provide overnight rest and accommodation for dogs travelling from stray pounds in Ireland and Scotland;
- Collect unclaimed stray dogs from pounds in Cumbria, Ayrshire, Lothian, Fife (and other areas as required), and facilitate the safe onward transfer of the dogs to Rehoming Centres, primarily in Scotland and the North of England;
- Support the central Logistics team and assist with outbound transfers from the Transfer Centre to Dogs Trust Rehoming Centres;
- Support internal transfers from our Centre in Northern Ireland to Rehoming Centres in Scotland and the North of England, by providing safe transport between locations. This will involve a night away from home; and
- Assist and support the Home from Home (HfH) fostering project as needed.

Key areas of accountability

Transport of Dogs

- Collect dogs and associated paperwork from stray dog pounds/other sources as directed by the management team and transfer onward to Dogs Trust Rehoming Centres.
- Assist the Logistics team with onward transfers from the Transfer Centre to Rehoming Centres.
- Complete Animal Transport Certificates as required by animal transport legislation.
- Provide for the welfare of all dogs in transit, including the safe loading and unloading of unassessed dogs at sending and receiving locations.
- Plan and execute transfer journeys to meet legislative and Dogs Trust policies on driving hours.
- Make hotel and other transport arrangements/bookings as necessary.

Vehicle Maintenance

- Carry out and maintain a record of regular vehicle checks in accordance with Dogs Trust policy, ensuring vehicles are kept in road legal standard.
- Thoroughly disinfect vehicles post-transport.
- Ensure vehicles are kept clean and tidy.
- Ensure vehicles are stocked with adequate water, bedding, leads and cleaning supplies.

Care and Welfare of Dogs in the Transfer Centre

Provide the utmost care and welfare to dogs in the Centre by undertaking key activities. These will include, but are not restricted to:

- Following SOPs and health and safety guidelines to maintain the cleanliness of kennels to the highest standards, including cleaning and disinfecting animal accommodation, drains, exercise areas, food preparation areas, laundry and outside areas.
- Ensuring positive welfare for each dog through play, enrichment, exercise, socialisation and training.
- Preparing food and water for each dog in your care.
- Grooming dogs as necessary.
- Keeping thorough records of each animal, using kennel diaries, kennel boards, computer systems and other documentation in accordance with procedures and data protection legislation.
- Carrying out daily health checks and reporting any physical changes to the Centre's management team or veterinary staff as required.

Home from Home Scheme

- Support the Home from Home scheme within the Transfer Centre, including carrying out home visits as directed by the management team and promoting the fostering opportunities to potential volunteers.
- Identify dogs that might benefit from being in a 'home from home' environment and assist in the matching of dogs with foster carers.

Other Activities

- Be familiar with SOPs and rehoming procedures, including the use of IT equipment in compliance with data protection requirements.
- Maintain the cleanliness of the site, including staff common areas and accommodation.

Any other reasonable duties.

*For guidance only. This is averaged out over the year.

Person Specification

Essential skills, qualifications, experience, and attributes

Educational qualification, skills, experience and behaviours

A knowledge of dogs and their welfare requirements. Experienced in handling a wide variety of dogs with the ability to handle unknown/unassessed dogs of different breeds and types and an understanding of breed specific legislation.
A positive and proactive attitude with a willingness to work with members of the public, staff and volunteers and an understanding of the importance of great customer service.
Hard working, enthusiastic and a team player.
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills (verbal and written).
Good organisational and time management skills.
Able to work on own initiative and have good judgement to escalate issues or seek guidance as appropriate.
Reliable and flexible
Knowledge of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Welfare of Animals Transport Order.
Administrative skills, including use of MS Office and computerised systems.
Commitments to the aims and objectives of Dogs Trust.
Ability to travel, including staying away from home on occasion.
Full, clean manual UK driving licence. Confident in driving a variety of vehicles, including vans of up to 3.5 tonnes and driving relatively long distances.
A reasonable level of fitness, stamina and mobility is required to complete the varied physical demands of the role.
Emotional resilience to manage the potentially emotional demands of the role.
Knowledge of the road and vehicle legislation is desirable.

Additional information

The full time working pattern expected is 5 shifts per week, which may include some late shifts (11am – 8pm). Weekend working will be agreed with the line manager and is likely to be at least two weekends per month. The rota can require you to work on a Bank Holiday. The role will also include night duties (5pm-8am), which will require staying on-site in staff accommodation. This role will involve some lone working and occasional overnight stays away from home.

