



Position Title: Animal Care Team

Classification: Full-time, non-exempt

Date: Starting June 2026

Starting Pay: \$17/hour

Must be 18 years of age or older – THIS IS NOT A SEASONAL POSITION

Reality Snapshot – Please Read

Working in animal rescue is meaningful, hands-on, and real. This role includes:

- Daily cleaning of urine, feces, vomit, and other messes
- Constant laundry, sanitation, and physical work
- Caring for senior animals, including those who may be frail or declining
- Team-based work where reliability and communication matter
- Evenings, weekends, and holidays — animal care happens every day

We are looking for dependable, compassionate, and resilient individuals who are comfortable with the joyful, messy, real life of rescue.

Position Summary

Young at Heart is a nonprofit organization based in Woodstock, IL. We operate a cageless adoption center and sanctuary for senior dogs and cats, as well as a foster home program. We are an organization that embraces teamwork and a grounded, positive approach toward rescuing and rehoming senior dogs and cats in our community.

We are seeking a full-time Animal Care Team person to join our team. The Animal Care Team provides safe and compassionate care for the senior dogs and cats at Young at Heart's adoption center. The Animal Care Team is responsible for breakfast and dinner shifts, cleaning and maintaining the facility, and working closely with staff and volunteers in the care of the pets and our adopters. This role also includes being a part of the Adoption Team, helping to place adoptable senior animals in loving homes.

The Real Life of Animal Care at Young at Heart

Working in animal rescue is deeply meaningful — and also physically demanding, emotionally real, and sometimes messy. This role is not sitting with animals all day. A typical shift includes:

- Cleaning urine, feces, vomit, and other messes (daily)
- Constant laundry, dishes, and sanitation — laundry is truly non-stop
- Fast-paced, physical work including bending, lifting, walking, and scrubbing
- Emotional situations, including caring for frail or declining senior animals
- Team-based work where reliability and communication matter
- Evenings, weekends, and holidays — animal care does not pause

If you find purpose in caring for animals through both the joyful and the hard parts of rescue, you may be a great fit here.

Preferred Applicant

The preferred applicant is reliable, hard-working, and takes pride in their work; is skilled at working with both dogs and cats of varying temperaments and sizes; is dedicated to maintaining a clean, organized, and safe environment; and demonstrates a consistently dependable work ethic — showing up on time, ready to work, even on hard days. The ideal candidate is a team player who is adaptable, reliable, people-oriented, and communicates clearly and respectfully.

Animal Care

- Prepare and provide food and water for the dogs and cats, and medical care as assigned
- Clean, disinfect, and maintain pet areas following disease control protocols — cleaning pet urine, feces, vomit, and other messes is a routine and essential part of every shift
- Monitor dogs and cats and report health or behavioral abnormalities
- Assist with collars, harnesses, and safe equipment use
- Maintain clean and comfortable bedding
- Introduce dogs and cats safely into social communities
- Perform bathing and basic grooming
- Maintain accurate animal care records
- Assist with emergency veterinary transport when needed
- Assist with animal meet & greets and adoptions as needed
- Practice and promote humane, compassionate animal care

Facility Care

- Clean, declutter, and organize facility and storage areas
- Remove garbage and recycling
- Clean and sanitize restrooms
- Operate laundry and dishwashing equipment — laundry is continuous
- Restock and organize supplies
- Mop, vacuum, and maintain safe and clean environments

People Care

- Promote a welcoming and supportive environment for adopters, volunteers, and visitors
- Provide warm, respectful, and supportive interaction while balancing hands-on animal care duties
- Mentor and guide volunteers safely and effectively
- Communicate clearly and work cooperatively with team members
- Maintain professionalism and discretion in emotional or sensitive situations

Position Requirements

Work is performed throughout the adoption center including animal living areas, isolation, office spaces, stairs, and outdoor areas. Regular exposure to animals, cleaning agents, and zoonotic diseases occurs. Animal bites and scratches are possible. Regular bending, reaching, kneeling, walking, scrubbing, and lifting up to 50 pounds is required.

This role includes caring for frail senior animals and may at times be emotionally difficult. Emotional resilience and the ability to remain calm, compassionate, and steady are important.

Evenings, weekends, and holidays are required — animal care does not pause.

All employees must become Fear Free Certified™.

Education & Experience

- High school diploma or equivalent required
- Experience in animal care, veterinary, shelter, or boarding environments preferred
- Volunteer and customer service experience a plus
- Interest in animal welfare and senior pet care valued

Knowledge, Abilities, & Skills

- Grounded, steady, and dependable
- Compassion balanced with practical, hands-on care
- Team-oriented, flexible, and calm under pressure
- Ability to manage routine through emergency situations
- Comfortable working with dogs and cats of varying needs and temperaments
- Commitment to positive, humane animal handling

Salary & Benefits

Starting pay: \$17/hour (\$18/hour after 90 days)

Full-time, non-exempt (35–40 hours/week)

Paid time off, HRA health benefit, discounted veterinary care after 90 days

Opportunity for growth over time within a hardworking, mission-driven environment.

Young at Heart is an equal opportunity employer.

Application Instructions – Please Read Carefully to Stand Out from the Crowd

At Young at Heart, authentic communication matters. Our work is hands-on, team-based, and deeply personal to the animals we care for. Because this role involves real-time decision making, teamwork, and direct animal care, we ask that your response be written in your own voice, without assistance from AI or others.

We care far more about kindness, reliability, resilience, and teamwork than writing ability. Simple, real responses are best.

In place of a traditional cover letter, please send your resume with a short email answering the following three items to jobs@adoptaseniorpet.com:

- 1. Why do you want to work with senior animals?**
- 2. Describe a time you handled something difficult, messy, or emotionally hard not related to animals.**
- 3. What strengths would you bring to this role?**

Young at Heart is a place where the joyful, messy, real life of rescue happens every day. We are not looking for polished writing — we are looking for kind, dependable humans.

By submitting your response, you confirm it reflects your own original voice and experiences. During the interview process, we may discuss your responses.