

# Volunteer guidelines



## Introduction

Welcome! Since you have joined us at the Shelter for dogs in Kavač we just want to inform you that the job of a volunteer is very fun, rewarding and educational. You will have the opportunity to meet some of our many dogs that will give you all their love and affection. The aim of the shelter is to help lost and abandoned dogs and stray dogs that didn't get the opportunity to be loved and cared for by people. Every volunteer is a valuable means by which we want to brighten the lives of dogs while they wait for a permanent home. With you by our side we want to achieve:

- that every dog gets socialization training
- that every dog is walked at least once daily
- that all dogs learn to go on leash
- for every sick dog to reach recovery at foster homes

and the most important-that every dog is rehomed in a loving permanent home with new owners that will take good care of him/her. This manual is made as a guide for you, volunteers. It contains guidelines for handling Shelter animals. Please read it carefully so that you can provide adequate care for dogs in this Shelter.

Thank you for donating your time to volunteering at the Shelter for dogs in Kavač. We hope that your time here will be as pleasant for you as it is for our furry companions!

## Working at the Shelter

We want to help you to make the most of your time at the shelter, working alongside the staff at the Shelter – Milica and Rozice (at the kennels), Sanya (in the office), Boka and Ali (in the vans) and the vets who support the work – Goca and Relja. Once you get more involved in the shelter you can find out more about different volunteering opportunities that might interest you, such as :

### FOSTERING

The role of a fosterer is crucial. It can very much improve the speed of rehabilitation of a sick animal or a small puppy, and can help the animal find a good home. We try to rehome our animals as soon as possible but that often can't be done because of illness or age (very young dogs that need care), and simply because there are not enough new homes on offer. In particular, some dogs for example don't cope well with shelter environment and they are a perfect opportunity for our fosterers. Every foster family or person is responsible for the animal that is in their care and plays a vital role in the animal's recovery.

What is needed?

A typical fosterer has to:

- **love animals,**
- ideally to **have experience in working with animals or owning a dog as a pet**
- **be patient** – the animal may be frightened by a new environment and will need some time to adjust
- **be committed**
- **be willing to foster the animal for at least a month**
- **have the time and space**
- **have the necessary skills** -if not you can always ask a professional (veterinarian for example) for instructions.

### ***Benefits for the animal***

The main benefit for all the animals that are at the foster homes is that they are away from the shelter environment and are a part of a "normal way of life". They will experience sounds, sights and smells of

everyday life. This will speed their rehabilitation and consequently help them find a home much sooner. Also the animal won't be contained in kennels and so is less likely to develop behaviors that come with that way of life.

### **Benefits for you**

If you can't afford for some reason to take care of an animal for a long period of time this could be a beneficial alternative. There is a **big emotional satisfaction** for fosterers when their animal find a loving home because they know it wouldn't have been possible without their help.

All our fosterers are volunteers and they pay all the expenses for the animal except medical treatments. For veterinary treatments that the shelter doesn't finance there will be given a discount by the shelter veterinary service.

### **FUNDRAISING**

The shelter is always looking for volunteers that are ready to organize or take a role in promoting the shelter and raising money with shelter dog shows, educational events, music concerts etc. If you are an adventurer you can organise a marathon or some other sports event for fundraising for shelter dogs. Let your hobbies be you're inspiration. Why wouldn't you're hobby or interest give you greater pleasure by helping raise money of other benefits for stray dogs? Except money and food, donations in blankets for younger dogs, leashes and collars are also welcome. You can donate or collect everything from shampoos and collars against parasites to bowls for food and water.

### **ENVIRONMENT BEAUTIFICATION AND HYGIENE**

If you are into gar

dening you can work on beautification of shelter environment and by doing so improve working environment and make the shelter a nice place to visit. You can take a challenge to make a path for volunteers that walk the dogs and help people and dogs feel better on walks. Also you can help workers in the shelter clean cannels, food and water bowls and the running pen. By doing so you will help them finish that obligation faster so that they can have time to spend with every dog.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS/PROMOTING ADOPTIONS**

For this job you don't have to be in the shelter. You can work from home. The only requirement is that you are active on one of the social networks. If you know you're way with words, can work on the computer and you love animals but don't have very much time this is a way to help. You can make a facebook profile and promote dogs that are adoptable along with their pictures and a few words about the dog that will help somebody to choose their new best friend.

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS**

We always need good pictures of our dogs for promoting adoptions. If you have a sharp eye and a camera you can be of great help.

### **ANIMAL CARE**

This doesn't only include dog walking. If you've had past experience with animals or know a bit about dog training or want to bathe or groom dogs you can get involved with animal care. You will have the opportunity to help problematic dogs that normally couldn't find a home by socializing them. Every dog that is clean and groomed feels better and a top of that he looks good and can find a home faster. Similarly, a well behaved dog will also be rehomed easily. You will need to let the shelter help you take the dogs in and out of the main kennel areas, and ask their advice if you are not sure about which dogs to walk. Spend a short time getting to know a dog before you take it out, and try to make a note of which dogs you walk and how they behave/any tips for other volunteers. Leads and dog treats to help with training are provided. If you are not experienced with dogs and want support and help on handling individual dogs, how to encourage a dog to walk on a lead etc. then please ask. We ask volunteers who walk dogs to stay within a specified area and to give them all a groom and a reward on their return. Wear clothes that can get dirty!

***All help is welcome and no matter which activity you chose you will be satisfied that you've helped in improving the quality of life for dogs in the shelter. We ask all volunteers to sign in and out when they leave, and note which dogs they have worked with, any health or other issues they have noticed, or suggestions for new activities or tasks.***

## Our goals

- *to care for all the dogs in the shelter to the very best of our ability*
- *for every dog find a new home forever*
- *for the public to learn the proper way of controlling overpopulation of dogs and to set guidelines for adequate dog handling.*
- *To promote responsible ownership by educating people, implementing a system of tagging and registration of dogs.*

A dog owner is responsible towards his dog when he:

- is informed about his dogs needs
- spays/neuters his dog
- takes his dog for routine vaccinations to the veterinarian (vaccines against rabies and infective diseases)
- provides his dog with professional care when it is necessary
- walks his dog at least once every day
- eases his suffering with euthanasia if its required
- doesn,t abandon his dog without a good reason

It is useful to keep in mind the rule of five freedoms because they dictate a happy life for every dog:

1. freedom from hunger and thirst
2. freedom on physical and thermal comfort
3. freedom from pain, injury and illness
4. freedom from unpleasant emotional experiences (fear, stress, mental exhaustion, boredom, suffering)
5. freedom to express natural forms of behavior (exploring, playing, chewing)

By acting responsibly towards their dog, owners can prevent overpopulation and the creation of new stray dogs. A stray dog is any dog that isnt under supervision of their owner or isn't contained in an enclosure but is free to roam in the community.

Stray dogs can create a series of health and security problems like:

- transmitting diseases from sick dogs to humans (zoonoses) and to other dogs
- injury and stress that they cause to people with their aggressive behavior
- disturbing people by barking and soiling (feces, trash that they scatter)
- killing or injuring cattle, wildlife or other animals in the surrounding
- traffic accidents

The dog control program is beneficial for the animals as it is for public health .Dogs that are left to fend for themselves often suffer from:

- malnourishment
- disease
- traffic accident injuries
- bad behavior towards the community that doesn't tolerate them.

That's why it is extremely important to reduce the number of stray dogs, and the best way of doing so is by promoting responsible ownership.

## How to approach a dog

It is really important to determine the state that the dog that you want to approach is in. Remember that each dog reacts differently to every person or the environment that is in, depending on his state of mind (nervous, anxious behaviour) as well as his physical state (pain, malnourishment). Dams with puppies will often defend their litter for the price of getting themselves killed which could put you in a bad position as well. Also, you have to have in mind that each of your actions will elicit a reaction in the behavior of the dog that you are trying

to approach. First determine the position in which the dog is (for example: is he on the street or near the street), is he in a group of dogs or is he standing out. Avoid eye contact because it promotes excitement and

can elicit a flight or fight response in the dog because it is viewed as a challenge. You can look down to the floor, or at the dogs legs or any spot near the dog that will allow you to observe the dog so that he doesn't regard you as a threat. It is important to adopt a non-aggressive body posture when approaching a scared dog, standing sideways on and approaching from the side is better than approaching head on.



*proper way of carrying a dog*



*wrong way of approaching a scared dog*



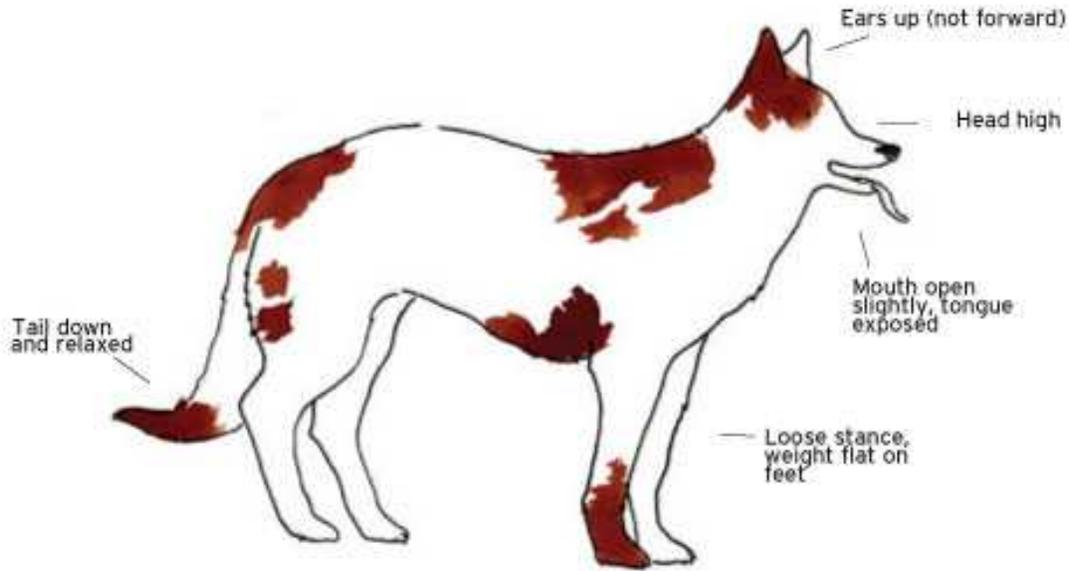
***Non-aggressive body posture***

- kneeling
- avoiding eye contact
- direction of the body slightly to side in comparison with the direction of body of the dog

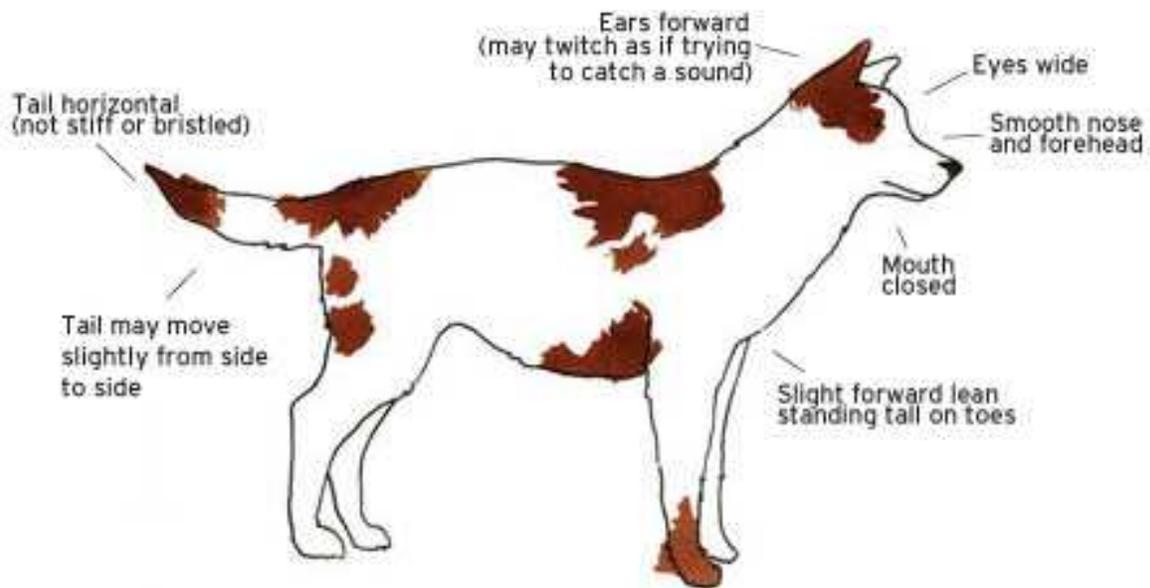
Don't lean yourself over the dog. A dog that is frightened or defensive-aggressive this considers a threat and often dogs in this position will defend themselves by biting. Kneel and offer the dog you're hand with the palm upwards. When the dog allows you to approach or to be approached don't try to pet him on the head first (its the same effect as approaching by standing). In contrary pet him on the chest and towards the neck and on the end on the head. Give him time to relax. Tail wagging, half shut eyes, muscle relaxing and open mouth with a tongue sticking out are some of the signs that the dog is accepting you in his environment. Don't make sudden noises or racket. Be as relaxed as you can and the dog will give you his confidence.

These are the main forms of behavior for dogs:

### **CALM, RELAXED DOG (IS EASILY APPROCHED OR APPROACHES)**

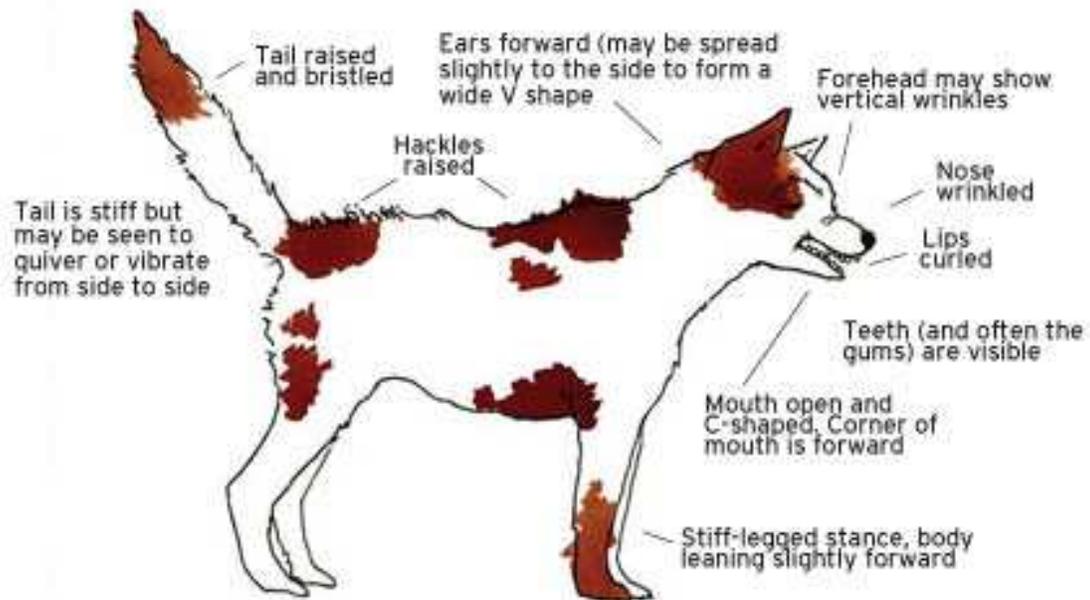


### **ATTENTIVE DOG**



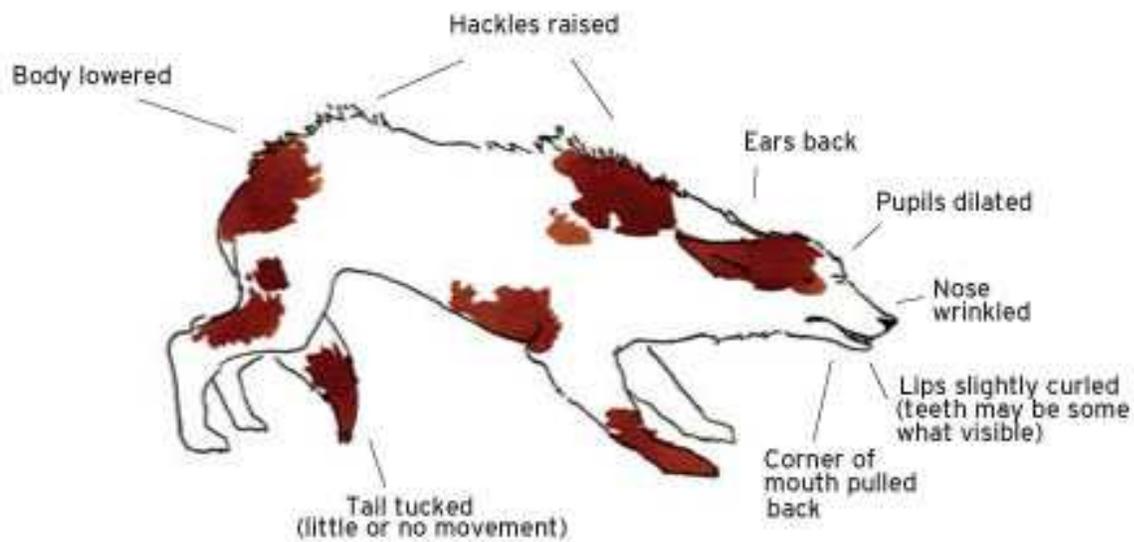
An attentive dog is a state which the dog takes briefly before he decides if the next situation is threatening or until he decides what he will do in a situation (bark, flee or approach).

## OFFENSIVE / DOMINANT AGGRESSION



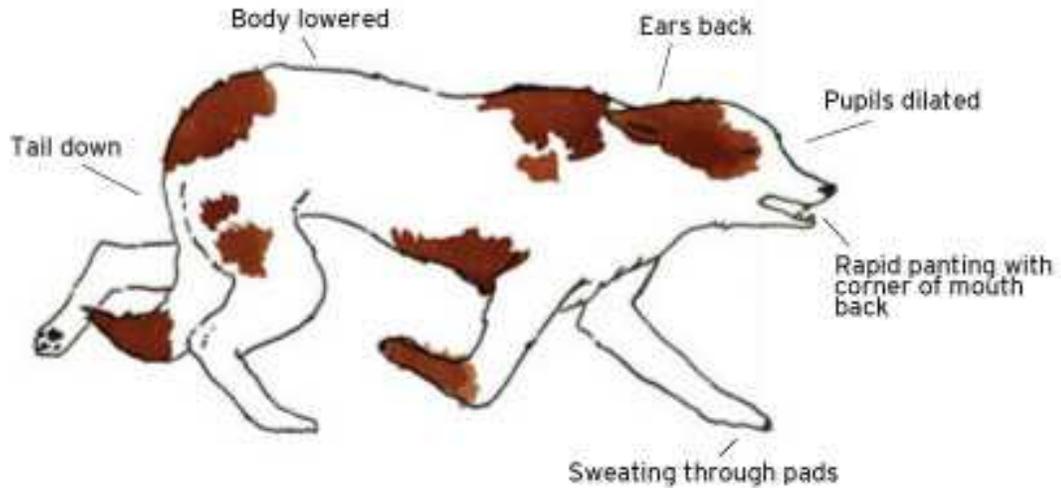
This type of aggression is very dangerous. The dog will lounge at a person or persons that try to get in their territory . The dog can elicit this behavior towards people and animals. Do not approach this dog without the help of a professional .

## DEFENSIVE AGGRESSION



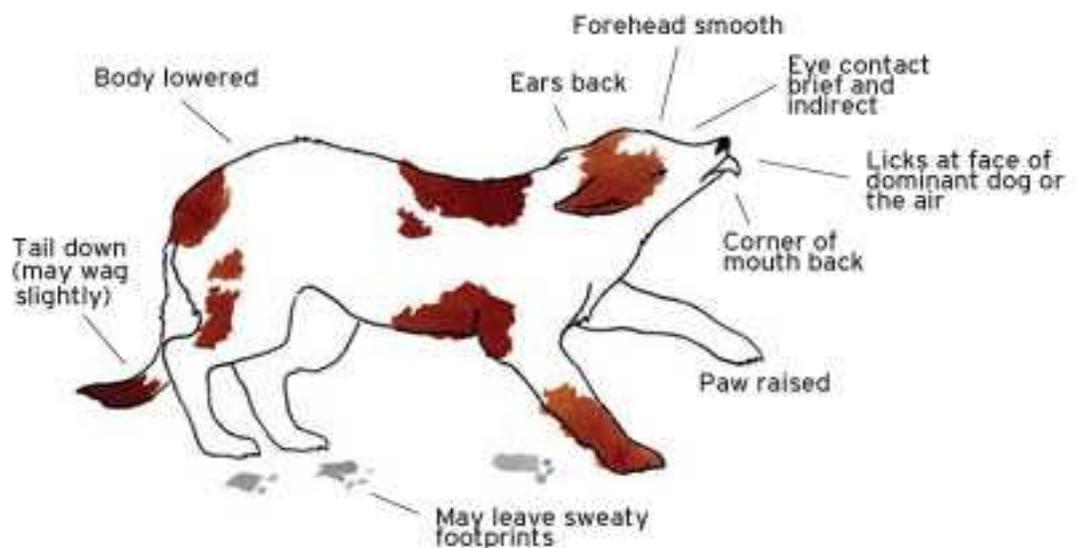
A dog in this state isn't less of a threat. He is scared of the situation he is in and will defend himself even by biting. Do not approach him without professional help.

### **DOG UNDER STRESS, USUALLY RUNNING AWAY**



This dog needs your love and attention. He is also scared but most of these dogs will react to kind words and some snacks in the pocket. Take a non-aggressive body posture and wait for him to approach.

### **SCARED AND/OR CONFUSED DOG**



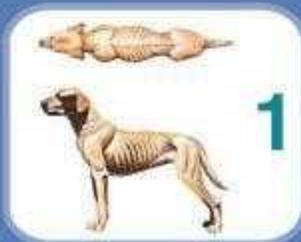
This dog will allow you to approach him. He is confused because he doesn't know what you want from him but will let you pet him.

## Dog health

As volunteers it is very important that you know to differentiate between the state of a sick and a healthy dog. It's useful to know when a dog is fed enough and when his skinny. A table that is given underneath is useful for a start:

Nestlé PURINA

# BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

TOO THIN	1	Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.	
	2	Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.	
	3	Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.	
IDEAL	4	Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.	
	5	Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.	
TOO HEAVY	6	Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.	
	7	Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.	
	8	Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.	
	9	Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.	

The BODY CONDITION SYSTEM was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated as documented in the following publications:

Mawby D, Bariges JV, Moyers T, et al. Comparison of body fat estimates by dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and deuterium oxide dilution in client owned dogs. *Compendium* 2001; 23 (PA): 70

Lafontaine DP. Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs. *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 22:10-15

Keady, et al. Effects of Diet Restriction on Life Span and Age-Related Changes in Dogs. *JAVMA* 2002; 220:1315-1320

Call 1-800-222-VETS (8387), weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CT



Dogs also often come into the shelter already sick or in an incubation period (a period that the dog is in before the viruses or the bacteria that are already in the dogs body do enough damage that they make a dog sick). That is why there is a quarantine in which the dogs spend some time before they can be moved in the main building so that they don't make other dogs ill. You won't be allowed to work with the dogs in the quarantine until they pass to the main building to eliminate the risk of transmitting diseases (by the way of cloths, boots, feeders and such).

It is important that you know the main signs of illness in the dog and notify the vet or the workers about it. Main signs of sickness are:

- there is eye discharge, eyes appear swollen
- ears seem red or inflamed, bad smell is coming from the ears, swollen ears, dog scratches the ears
- there's a discharge from the nose that may be purulent, bloody or the nose can be covered with crusts
- sneezing, coughing or heavy breathing
- external parasites as fleas and ticks
- wounds on the skin that tell about previous injuries
- limping
- vomiting or diarrhea

Make a note of any signs ill health or injury of possible, and make sure you inform one of the shelter workers, or the vet if it is considered urgent (Goca 069 527 131).

**THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTERING AND WE  
WISH YOU A PLEASANT DAY AT OUR SHELTER!**