



## **Tips for Volunteers in Action During Animal Evacuation**

- Target Audience: Volunteers
- Description: This guide provides advice for volunteers on how to act efficiently during animal evacuations in emergency situations.



## Tips for Volunteers in Action During Animal Evacuation

In emergency situations, every minute counts. These tips are designed to guide volunteers in the safe and efficient evacuation of animals. Keeping calm and following these steps can make a significant difference.

### Preparations

**Training:** Ensure you have received the necessary training on evacuation procedures and animal handling.

**Shelter Map:** Familiarize yourself with the shelter map, including all emergency exits and the location of the animals.

**Equipment:** Have the necessary equipment on hand: carriers, collars, harnesses, leashes, crates, and any specific materials for animals with special needs.

- It is possible that the necessary equipment may not be available at the time of the emergency, such as collars, harnesses, leashes, and crates. Therefore, it is recommended to have extra equipment prepared for these situations.
- Visual material (photos and videos) is always useful for the recognition and identification of the animals, so this information should be kept up to date.

**Animal List:** Review the list of animals, identifying those with special dietary, medication, and handling needs.

### Evacuation Procedure

**Stay Calm:** In emergency situations, it is vital to stay calm and act in an organized manner. Your calmness can influence the animals and other volunteers. Maintain a serene tone of voice and act with confidence.

**Communication:** Establish communication groups on WhatsApp or other applications. Each group should have a clear purpose to avoid information overload.

- Communication is crucial in these situations. Volunteers must be aware that every minute counts and can make a significant difference. Effective and clear communication ensures that everyone is informed and coordinated.





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**Roles and Responsibilities:** Define and assign specific roles to each volunteer (e.g., group leader, transport carrier handler, communication coordinator).

**Use of Safety Equipment:** Utilize appropriate collars and harnesses. Podencos should wear 3-point harnesses for safety.

- Some of our furry friends will be more nervous than usual. We must secure them as best as possible to prevent them from escaping or getting injured.
- Fabric carrier bags can be useful in this situation because they allow for quick use for very scared small-sized animals or those with special needs. This is a temporary measure until a sturdier carrier or crate can be found.

### Evacuation Steps

**Initial Review:** Conduct a quick review of the shelter to identify the situation and the most critical areas.

**Priority Evacuation:** Prioritize the evacuation of animals based on their location and health status. Animals in higher-risk areas and those with special needs should be evacuated first.

**Record and Control:** Keep a record of evacuated animals, noting who they are going with, their destinations, and any special needs. This will help maintain control and facilitate reunification.

- The evacuation time will be determined by the competent authorities, such as the fire department.
- It is essential to be aware of following their guidelines and respecting them at all times.
- We must understand that the evacuation time will be brief and valuable. Therefore, efficiency and speed in our actions are crucial to ensuring the safety of all animals.



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### Communication and Coordination

**Permanent Contact:** Maintain an open and constant line of communication with the designated shelter coordinator.

**Continuous Updates:** Provide regular updates on the progress of the evacuation and the status of the animals.

**Support Groups:** Form support groups with specific tasks to ensure clear and effective communication.

### Animal Relocation

**Temporary Destinations:** Ensure that animals are moved to safe, pre-identified locations, such as other shelters or temporary foster homes.

**Relocation Control:** Record and monitor the relocation of each animal to prevent confusion and facilitate tracking.

### Closure of Evacuation

**Final Verification:** Once all animals are evacuated, conduct a final check of the shelter to ensure no animal is left behind.

- The final verification of the shelter or evacuated facility is a critical step to ensure all animals have been successfully evacuated.
- The time and permission available for this task will be determined by the competent authorities, such as the fire department. It is essential to follow their guidelines and respect their instructions at all times.
- We must be mentally prepared that the time for verification will be brief and valuable, so efficiency and speed in our actions are crucial to ensure no animal is left behind and all are safe.



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### Additional Details

- **Managing Animal Nervousness:** It is crucial to understand that some of our furry friends will be more nervous than usual during an evacuation. For this reason, it is imperative to secure them properly with collars and harnesses to prevent potential escapes or injuries.
- **Assignment of Roles and Verification of Destinations:** During the evacuation, each volunteer must have a clear and defined role. It is essential to verify who is transporting the animals and to which destinations, ensuring that all animals are correctly accounted for and located.
- **Post-Evacuation Assistance:** After the evacuation and relocation, volunteers must be prepared to provide additional help. This includes caring for and walking the animals in new shelters, addressing specific needs in foster homes, and organizing care groups and shifts if the shelter is relocated to an improvised location. Given the improvised nature of these places, constant care is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the animals during the emergency period.
- **Respect for Schedules and Rules of Auxiliary Shelters and Facilities:** Volunteers must be aware of and respect the schedules and rules established by the shelters and associations offering help during the emergency. Collaborating harmoniously with these shelters is fundamental to the success of the evacuation operation and the well-being of the animals.

### Things Volunteers Should Do During an Evacuation

- **Stay Calm:** Maintain calm at all times. Serenity helps avoid mistakes and ensures the safety of both animals and volunteers.
- **Follow Authorities' Instructions:** Always heed the instructions of the fire department and other competent authorities. Obedience to these guidelines is crucial for a safe and effective evacuation.
- **Coordinate Actions:** Consult and coordinate all your actions with the team leader or shelter staff. Collaborative decisions are essential for a successful evacuation operation.



## Tips for Volunteers in Action During Animal Evacuation

- **Constant Supervision of Animals:** Ensure that each animal is under constant supervision once they are out of their enclosures. Never leave them unattended.
- **Use of Appropriate Equipment:** Use secure and suitable carriers, collars, and harnesses for the size and temperament of each animal.
- **Accurate Animal Registration:** Maintain precise and updated records of each evacuated animal to ensure all are accounted for.
- **Attention to Special Needs:** Pay special attention to the specific dietary, medicinal, and handling needs of the animals during the evacuation.
- **Safety in Hazardous Areas:** Follow the authorities' instructions and avoid entering areas declared dangerous or unsafe. Your safety is paramount.
- **Information Updates:** Always keep information about the location and status of each animal updated to ensure precise communication and effective coordination.
- **Stay in Assigned Roles:** Remain in your designated area or assigned roles, and inform the team leader if you need to move. Coordination is key for an efficient evacuation.
- **Recognition of Animal Stress:** Be aware that animals may be very scared and stressed. This can make them more prone to attempting to escape or reacting unpredictably.
- **Additional Equipment:** Bring extra equipment, such as collars, harnesses, and carriers, in case they are urgently needed.
- **Importance of Shifts:** Organize and respect work shifts to ensure a continuous and sustainable effort throughout the emergency.

Your dedication and effort during an emergency evacuation can make a significant difference in the lives of many animals.

